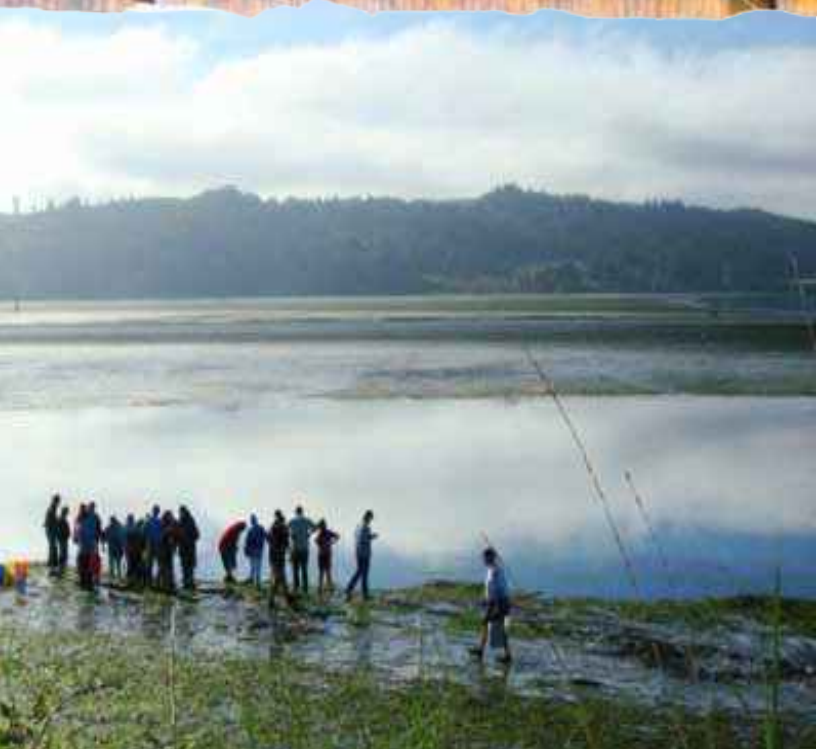




### PART III

## TRADITIONAL FOODS IN NATIVE AMERICA

A compendium of traditional foods stories  
from American Indian and Alaska Native communities



To say that the roots of the Seneca people lie in the soil of their land  
is not merely an agricultural statement;  
it is a profound declaration of who the Seneca people are,  
of a proud heritage and an indomitable desire to return to the ways  
that will restore health and reaffirm cultural identity.

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PATRICIA GALEZA  
Food is Our Medicine Project—Seneca Nation





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The findings and conclusions in this report are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official position of the CDC.

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# PURPOSE AND BACKGROUND

Commissioned by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) Native Diabetes Wellness Program (NDWP), this report is the third in a compendium of stories highlighting traditional foods programs in culturally and geographically diverse American Indian and Alaska Native (AI/AN) communities. The first and second parts in the compendium, "Traditional Foods in Native America," can be accessed at <http://www.cdc.gov/diabetes/projects/ndwp/traditional-foods.htm>.

For more than a decade, the CDC's NDWP has supported tribally-driven efforts to promote health and help prevent type 2 diabetes in AI/AN communities. Among many promising efforts, such as the highly acclaimed *Eagle Books* series and the Diabetes Education in Tribal Schools (DETS) K–12 Curriculum, a particularly innovative approach to diabetes prevention has been the NDWP's Traditional Foods Program.

From 2008 to 2014, NDWP's Traditional Foods Program helped support 17 tribal communities through cooperative agreements. The partner grantees represent tribes and tribal organizations from coast to coast, each taking a unique approach to restoring and sustaining a healthful and traditional food system. While supporting health promotion and type 2 diabetes prevention efforts, these projects also addressed critical issues such as food security, food sovereignty, cultural preservation, and environmental sustainability.

In addition to highlighting stories about Traditional Foods Program partner grantees, the NDWP was eager to learn more about traditional foods initiatives across Indian Country. At first, the gathered stories were intended to help educate NDWP about how to continue this work. As the collection of stories evolved, it became apparent that tribal representatives participating in the project wanted their stories to be shared with all who could learn from them, with the hope that those who heard the stories would then share stories of their own. The nine stories presented here comprise Part III in the series—a compendium of stories involving traditional foods—to achieve that goal.

To collect this compendium of interviews and stories, NDWP partnered with Chelsea Wesner (Choctaw), a program planner at the University of Oklahoma's American Indian Institute. Based on interviews with key people in each community, the stories in this compendium demonstrate how traditional foods programs are building food security, preserving cultural knowledge, and restoring health.

## Methods

This compendium used ethnographic methods in order to understand the cultural significance and benefits of traditional foods programs in Native American communities. These methods guided the collection of stories through informal and structured interviews and helped identify the common themes among them. Following an informal conversation, each interviewee was asked to respond in writing to five or six open-ended questions. This method gave the storyteller time to think about what she or he would like to say, allowing a rich and thoughtful narrative process.

Nine traditional foods programs and supporting organizations were invited to participate for this report—Part III of the series *Traditional Foods in Native America*. These nine programs were identified by the author and NDWP staff as having innovative approaches to encouraging traditional food promotion and promising practices.

The interviews and stories for the entire compendium were collected from the AI/AN Nations and tribal organizations outlined in the table below. The nine programs and supporting organizations featured in this report are listed under Part III.

Table 1. Programs featured in compendium.		
<b>TRADITIONAL FOODS IN NATIVE AMERICA</b> <b>A Compendium of Stories from the Indigenous Food Sovereignty Movement in</b> <b>American Indian and Alaska Native Communities</b>		
PART I	PART II	PART III
**Mohegan Foodways (Mohegan Tribe)	^Ramah Navajo Community	^Aleutian Pribilof Islands Association, Inc.
**Mvskoke Food Sovereignty Initiative (Muscogee (Creek) Nation)	^Standing Rock Sioux Tribe	**First Nations Development Institute (FNDI)
**Oneida Community Integrated Food Systems (Oneida Nation)	^Tohono O'odham Nation	**NATIVE HEALTH
**Seven Arrows Garden (Pueblo of Laguna)	**^Aleutian Pribilof Islands Association, Inc.	^Southeast Alaska Regional Health Consortium (SEARHC)
**Suquamish Community Health Pro- gram (Suquamish Tribe)	**^Cherokee Nation of Oklahoma	^Healthy Roots (Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians)
**Traditional Plants and Food Program (Northwest Indian College)	**^Southeast Alaska Regional Health Consortium (SEARHC)	^Building Community— Strengthening Traditional Ties (Indian Health Care Resource Center of Tulsa)
		**Food is Our Medicine (Seneca Nation)
		^Community Health Program (Salish Kootenai College)
		^Healthy Traditions Project (Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians)
* Interviews, stories and recipes from these communities can be found on the American Indian Institute's Wellness in Native America blog (see bibliography). ^ Indicates Traditional Foods Program grantee partners, a program under the CDC's Native Diabetes Wellness Program. **Indicates other food sovereignty communities and programs in Indian Country.		



Discussions of how traditional foods programs address nutrition-related issues in Indian Country (such as food security and type 2 diabetes prevention) are highlighted in Parts I and II of the compendium. This report, Part III, highlights the benefits and cultural significance of traditional foods programs in Native communities.

## The Benefits and Significance of Traditional Foods Programs in Indian Country

A primary tenet of the global food sovereignty movement, a term coined by members of Via Campesina in 1996, asserts that food is a human right, and to secure this right, people should have the ability to define their own food systems.<sup>1</sup> In recent decades, an increasing number of AI/AN nations have become a part of this global movement by reclaiming traditional food systems and practices. Through this compendium of traditional food stories, we continue learning how tribal communities are benefiting from this decision—and benefiting in far more ways than expected.

Among the greatest of benefits reported by tribal communities involved in food sovereignty efforts is the sharing of cultural knowledge. In Native American communities, traditional foods are connected to stories, ceremonies, songs, and cultural values and practices that have endured for generations. Important themes identified throughout this compendium include the connection of efforts to reintroduce traditional foods with the sharing of cultural knowledge and storytelling; the cultural meaning and significance of land and water as sources of life and traditional foods; and the role of children teaching their families about healthful eating and physical activity.

The momentum of efforts to reclaim traditional foods and practices throughout Indian Country is timely. The burden of diet-related chronic diseases, especially type 2 diabetes, continues to grow among AI/AN adults and children (CDC, 2011; Gordo & Otto, 2012). In addition, it is critically important for tribal elders, who have experienced traditional foods and practices as a way of life, to share cultural knowledge and traditional food practices before these stories and this way of life are lost. Traditional foods and practices link the present with the past, serving as a connection between today's youth and their ancestors.

A quote from a story in this report beautifully describes this deep connection between food and Indigenous peoples:

To say that the roots of the Seneca people lie in the soil of their land is not merely an agricultural statement; it is a profound declaration of who the Seneca people are, of a proud heritage and an indomitable desire to return to the ways that will restore health and reaffirm cultural identity.

Pat Galeza, Seneca Nation  
Food is Our Medicine Project

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<sup>1</sup> “Global Small-Scale Farmers’ Movement Developing New Trade Regimes”, Food First News & Views, Volume 28, Number 97 Spring/Summer 2005, p.2.

For a culture valuing food as medicine, the loss of traditional foods certainly affects health and well-being. Fortunately, by reclaiming traditional foods and practices, AI/AN nations are not only feeding their communities, but also restoring health and preserving culture through a variety of methods. Some of the most beneficial methods are outlined in the next section on key findings and shared themes.

## Key Findings and Shared Themes

In this report, key findings and shared themes reveal that traditional foods programs in Native American communities hold a number of common beliefs and practices to support the process of reclaiming a traditional food system. Derived from programs featured in this report, the following themes are listed in order from the most common beliefs and practices to those more culturally and geographically unique.

1. **Sharing and preserving cultural knowledge:** Preserving methods of gathering and harvesting traditional foods; the cultural meaning of land and water; a cultural revival, rooted in strong and generous communities; the belief that food brings communities together; preserving cultural practices, as food connects the present with the past; the desire for a culturally-informed food system; and hosting cultural camps and cultural activities.
2. **Sharing stories and storytelling:** Collecting stories from elders; sharing the story of community; using stories and books to share health messages with children; and storytelling in elders' circles.
3. **Food-based activities and food demonstrations:** Taste tests for children and youth; cooking, hunting, fishing, gathering, and food preservation classes; food demonstrations; a "Planting-to-Plate" initiative, much like Farm-to-School efforts; and summer food programs for children and youth.
4. **Physical activity:** Reviving traditional games and traditional forms of physical activity; inspiring tribal members to live and sustain a healthy lifestyle through improving diet and increasing physical activity; engaging youth in physical activity during summer camps; and hosting community events, such as a 5K run/walk, to benefit traditional foods programming.
5. **Nutrition education:** Researching and providing education on contaminant risks and nutritional benefits of traditional foods; identifying and labeling nutritional information for traditional foods; reintroducing Native models of nutrition; nutrition and traditional foods education in communities and schools.
6. **Programs designed for children and youth:** Hosting camps for youth with health promotion, cultural activities, and physical activity; establishing school and community gardens.
7. **Curriculum development:** Curriculum and lessons designed to use with traditional foods activities and programming.
8. **Food sovereignty:** Helping tribal communities establish and maintain a local food system; restoring health and well-being through restoring traditional foods and plants; restoring a culturally informed food system; and protecting gathering sites for tribes to develop fully the benefits of food sovereignty.
9. **Diabetes prevention:** High prevalence of type 2 diabetes in tribal communities; nutrition-related diseases on the rise (due to an increase in sugar, salt, and fat in diet and increased intake of processed foods); shared belief that prevention starts with children and youth.
10. **Increasing the availability of traditional foods:** Honoring treaty rights to establish protected gathering space for traditional foods; increase in the cultivation and consumption of traditional foods.



- 11. Economic development and food-related enterprises:** Food-related business opportunities and economic development; establishing farm stands and employing youth to operate them; farmers markets and selling specialty items (organic and hormone-free meats, dairy products, and traditional plants and food items); selling traditional food items in local grocery and convenience stores; and the idea for stocking vending machines in schools and tribal communities with healthful snack options produced by the tribe.
- 12. Issues of food affordability, availability and accessibility:** Concerns regarding household spending on food; food insecurity; higher rates of poverty in many tribal communities, compounding the issue of affordability; limited availability and accessibility of fresh, whole foods in tribal communities; creation of a food pantry to meet basic needs.
- 13. Language preservation:** Elders' circle, a place to sing, share stories, talk about culture, food, health, medicinal and ceremonial plants, and share cultural knowledge; linking traditional foods with language preservation.
- 14. Sustainable agriculture and growing practices:** Education for organic growing methods, integrated pest management, and crop rotation; indigenous land management and sustainable food production practices; and being stewards of the land, protecting the land and resources for the seventh generation
- 15. An advocacy vehicle for Native food systems:** Support for a policy alliance to advocate for shared goals and needs among Native food systems and initiatives.

## Featured Interviews

The following section includes interviews and stories from nine traditional foods programs and supporting partners. Three programs are highlighted for specific initiatives: the Aleutian and Pribilof Islands Association, Inc. (APIA) for a book on traditional foods, their nutritional values, and cultural history; the First Nations Development Institute (FNDI) for innovative funding and support of traditional foods programs and enterprises; and the Southeast Alaska Regional Health Consortium (SEARHC) for hosting a summer meeting with all 17 NDWP CDC Traditional Foods Program partner grantees.

Following the special highlights, three programs are featured with full interviews on traditional foods programming and success stories: the Healthy Roots Project, Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians; Food is Our Medicine program, Seneca Nation; and the Healthy Traditions Project, Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians.

The final three programs highlight the use of the *Eagle Books* series in programming for children and youth: NATIVE HEALTH's diabetes prevention youth camp in Arizona, the Indian Health Care Resource Center of Tulsa's traditional foods program in Oklahoma, and the traditional foods program for children and young adults at Salish Kootenai College in Montana.

SPECIAL HIGHLIGHT  
An Interview with Suanne Unger,  
Author of *Qaqamiigux: Traditional Foods and Recipes  
from the Aleutian and Pribilof Islands*

Aleutian Pribilof Islands Association, Inc.—Alaska

The following is from an interview with Suanne Unger in August 2014. Ms. Unger is the author of *Qaqamiigux*, a cultural book released in summer 2014 on traditional foods and recipes from the Aleutian and Pribilof Islands region of Alaska. Ms. Unger has served as health research coordinator with the Aleutian Pribilof Islands Association, Inc. (APIA) for more than a decade. APIA was a Traditional Foods Program partner grantee with the CDC's Native Diabetes Wellness Program from 2008 through 2014. This interview highlights her experience and role as the primary author of *Qaqamiigux*.

**Q: Tell us a bit about your work and background with the Aleutian Pribilof Islands Association, Inc. (APIA).**

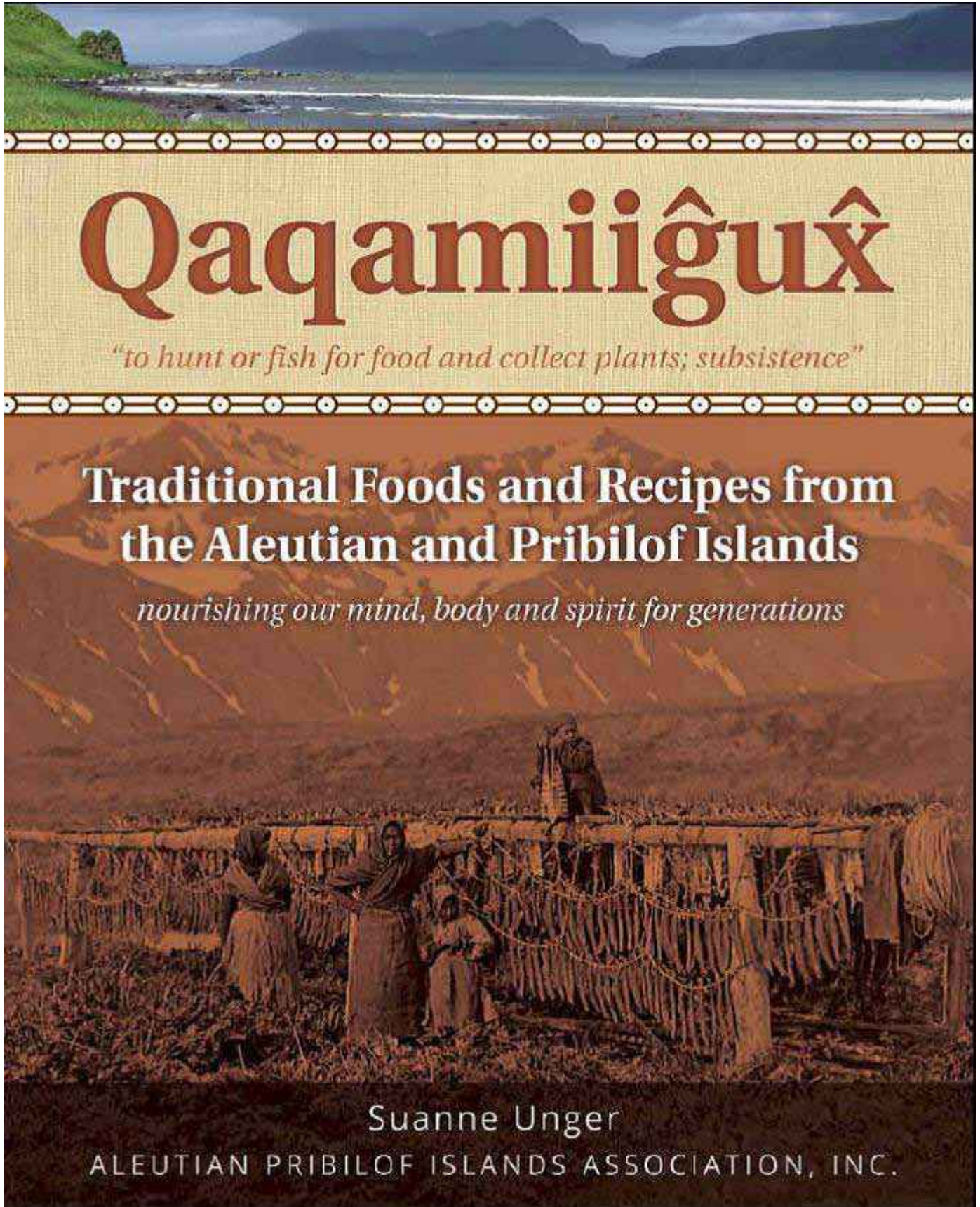
A: I have worked for the Aleutian Pribilof Islands Association, Inc. (APIA) since 2001 as an Environmental Health Research Coordinator and have been in charge of the NDWP CDC Traditional Foods Program since 2008. Initially, I was hired to work on a five-year research project funded by the National Institutes of Health looking at the benefits and risks of Alaska Native foods. This research culminated in developing a process that Tribes could utilize to better understand how to evaluate the risks and benefits of the traditional diet through sampling their local foods for nutrients and contaminants. This process was then developed into curriculum and workshops to share with Tribes around the State of Alaska. Funded by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency for two years, six trainings took place in rural Alaska.

For the past six years, APIA has been funded through the CDC to promote activities that encourage traditional food use for health promotion. Under this funding, we have been able to support traditional foods cooking demonstrations annually for three to six communities in the region, and support health fairs, elders' potlucks, the Urban Unangax Culture Camp in Anchorage, and other events. One of several sustainable components that resulted from this funding is a 381-page full color book on traditional foods from the region.

**Q: In July 2014, APIA released a new cultural book on traditional foods and recipes from the Aleutian and Pribilof Islands Region, which is quite an accomplishment. As the primary author, what inspired you to write this book?**

A: There were several motives that inspired me to write this book. After examining the contaminant risks and nutritional benefits of consuming traditional foods from 2001 to 2008 under several projects, it was becoming more apparent to me that the focus should be more on the nutritional benefits of the traditional





*The cover of Qaqamiigux. Courtesy of Sue Unger.*



diet. Although it is important to continue and monitor contaminant risk in both our store foods and traditional foods, I felt a more increasing urgency to focus on the nutritional importance of traditional foods in the diet. As a colleague of mine frequently stated: “People in our region are not dying from contaminants; they are dying from diabetes and other dietary-related diseases.” This statement rang in my ears for years and inspired me to focus more on how traditional foods play a role in helping to prevent dietary-related diseases.

Another significant factor that inspired the production of this book was the result of a dietary survey completed in the Aleutian and Pribilof Islands Region. The survey showed there was a decline in the use of traditional foods in the community over the years. When survey respondents replied as to why they have decreased their consumption of traditional foods, many replied that they lacked the knowledge of how to prepare them. After losing a grandparent or other food preparer in the family, they no longer carried the knowledge. This book addresses the concern of people losing that knowledge. Hundreds of recipes and information on how to harvest, preserve, and prepare traditional foods are included.

**Q: Describe some of the highlights and sections of the book. Do you have any favorite recipes or stories?**

A: The book is divided into two parts: 1) introductory matter on topics related to understanding the benefits and risks of a traditional diet, and 2) information and recipes on traditional foods from the region. The second part of the book is the “meat” of the book and contains cultural, historical, and contemporary information on harvesting, preserving, and preparing traditional foods. It also contains nutritional information on all of the foods as well as recipes. Traditional values, as expressed by Elders, occur throughout each of the chapters. Included in the book are also hundreds of words translated into two dialects of the regional language, Unangam tunuu.

There are several recipes in the book that I have enjoyed making and eating, including: seagull egg pie, halibut salad, octopus patties, and mossberry fritters, to name a few. I love all of the stories that are included in the book. Some of my favorites are “Why people on St. Paul do not eat hair seal” by Mary Bourdukofsky and “John Gordioff’s directions for butchering a sea lion.” This page spread with the sea lion butchering information contains beautiful historic photographs.

**Q: You’ve described producing this book with guidance from elders, hunters, and food preparers from the region. Will you share a bit about this experience?**

A: The time I spent interviewing elders and other food preparers was undoubtedly the highlight of working on this book. Over 25 interviews were recorded and transcribed to include in this book. I am so grateful for the time and trust that people put in me when sharing their stories and recipes. It was such a nice opportunity to get to know some of the elders throughout our region.

**Q: What did you find most challenging about producing this book, which includes 381-pages of content, historical photographs, and illustrations? What did you find most rewarding about this experience?**

A: There were several challenges in producing this book. Incorporating the language was surprisingly a big challenge, but also one of the most rewarding aspects of this book. I enjoyed working with language experts Moses Dirks (Atkan dialect) and Ilidor Philemonof (Eastern dialect) to incorporate the words throughout the book.

Incorporating nutritional information for all of the foods in the book was also a challenge. I collaborated with Julia Sargent, APIA Head Start Nutritional Coordinator, to create this information. We struggled to try and find an interesting and effective way to demonstrate the nutritional qualities of traditional foods in comparison with store foods. We wanted to develop new and innovative graphics that would highlight the nutrients of importance. This was both time consuming and challenging.

An important part of this book is the photographs that appear throughout. The historic photographs were obtained from collections throughout the United States as well as international archives. These historic photographs were time consuming to find and were also often costly to get permission to use. Also, there are many contemporary photographs that were used throughout the book. It was very time consuming to get media consent forms for all of the people in the images. Despite all of the labor involved in using these photographs, they were of utmost importance and are very rewarding in the final product.

**Q: What is the best advice you could offer a tribal community interested in producing a similar book on traditional foods, recipes, and stories?**

A: This type of book is very time consuming to prepare and requires a huge team effort to pull off. It is not a one-person job as is evident by the long list of people in the acknowledgement section.

Special thanks to Ms. Suanne Unger for sharing her time and stories. To learn more about this project, please find contact information on page 54.



*Excerpt from the book on preparing salmon eggs. Courtesy of Sue Unger.*





*Photo courtesy of First Nations Development Institute.*

## SPECIAL HIGHLIGHT

# Native American Foods and Health Program

### First Nations Development Institute—Colorado

The following is an interview with staff from the First Nations Development Institute (FNDI) from May 2014. Founded in 1980, FNDI is a Native-run nonprofit and charitable foundation located in Longmont, Colorado. Through mid-2014, FNDI had invested and managed \$21.3 million in grants to projects and organizations supporting and strengthening economic opportunity and health among American Indian people and their communities. While FNDI is not a CDC Traditional Foods Program partner grantee, the organization has been a leader in food sovereignty efforts throughout Indian Country. This interview highlights FNDI's Native American Foods and Health program.

**Q: Tell us a bit about FNDI's Native American Foods and Health program and the Native Agriculture and Food Systems Initiative (NAFSI).**

**A:** Like other assets in Native communities, Native food systems have been heavily altered and, in some cases, destroyed. Our work under the Native Agriculture and Food Systems Initiative is really aimed at assisting tribes in reclaiming control of their local food systems.

The NAFSI program looks at Native food systems issues through an economic lens, acknowledging that food heavily intersects with issues of health, diet and community and economic development. Our focus is to support programs aimed at offsetting household spending on food and support food-related business











*Previous page: Products of NAFSI grantees. Photos courtesy of First Nations Development Institute.*

development by helping tribes control local food production, processing and distribution.

**Q: What do you enjoy most about working with the 29 NAFSI grantees?**

A: Seeing the commitment and the perseverance in mostly low-resource communities is the best part of this work. This all translates into innovation in terms of program development and design.

**Q: FDNI just announced the new “Business of Indian Agriculture” curriculum. Tell us a bit about the curriculum and the approach you took to developing such a comprehensive resource.**

A: The curriculum was developed in partnership with the First Americans Land-Grant Consortium (FALCON) and aimed at providing tools for producers so that they can expand their business and entrepreneurial capacity. The curriculum was piloted at five tribal colleges, allowing tribal college and community trainers and participants to expand, develop, and inform the content. This, in turn, turned into a five-module curriculum that covers topics from business and marketing to land use and planning.

**Q: As a founding partner of the Native Food Sovereignty Alliance, what are your goals for the future of food sovereignty in Indian Country? What steps do you take to stay grounded and connected at the grassroots level?**

A: One consistent finding in our food systems work is that Native communities need and want an advocacy



vehicle in the food systems area. The Native American Food Sovereignty Alliance is really intended to be this vehicle, to be a policy and advocacy alliance for Indian Country. This alliance is aimed at providing Native communities a voice in federal policy when it comes to food issues and looking at how tribal policy can be used to support, develop and nurture food work in Native communities. The ability to stay grounded is really driven by the fact that this is a community driven alliance and informed by the needs and concerns of Indian Communities.

**Q: What approach does FNDI take when planning for sustainability and the future of your programs?**

A: Sustainability is a challenge for almost every community nonprofit in the country, and even more so for Indian Country since investment from outside sources remains slim. We try to encourage sustainability in a number of different ways: encouraging philanthropy to make more investments in Indian Country, training organizations to develop broader outreach and include tribal governments, and encouraging organizations to look at for-profit opportunities. The reality is that Native communities are resilient, even in the absence of resources.

Special thanks to First Nations Development Institute (FNDI) staff for sharing their time and stories. To learn more about FNDI, please find contact information on page 54.



*Photo courtesy of First Nations Development Institute.*







*Traditional dancing in tribal house. Photo courtesy of Southeast Alaska Native Health Consortium (SEARHC).*

## SPECIAL HIGHLIGHT

### 2013 Traditional Foods Program Grantee Partner Meeting

Southeast Alaska Regional Health Consortium (SEARHC)—Alaska

The following is an interview with SEARHC's Ken Hoyt from June 2014. SEARHC is one of 17 NDWP's Traditional Foods Program grantee partners. During the summer of 2013, the Traditional Foods Program staff at SEARHC hosted an annual meeting, welcoming all the NDWP grantee partners from across the country to gather with project officers and provide project updates. In this interview, Mr. Hoyt shares the poignant experience of hosting this large gathering of AI/AN nations and the great honor of sharing his culture and community through traditional foods.

**Q: Would you mind sharing a bit about the 2013 Traditional Foods Program grantee meeting and what it was like hosting a cultural exchange with tribal communities from across the country?**

A: It was such a profound honor to have been chosen to host the meeting, for me and for my community. It was a joy to coordinate with all the parties it took to roll out the red carpet—our traditional foods

project advisory board; other grantee partners, especially from CDC; our local tribal government; congregations; Native dancers; the museum; the hotel; various food donors; caterers; tour operators; even the convention center. Everyone who helped out did so joyfully, conscious of the importance of the event.

It's not every day that an event like that comes to Wrangell. We have our annual local festivals and such, but this one was out of the ordinary. We were delighted for our town and our program to be in the spotlight, especially for an audience that was new to Alaska, but not at all new to Native communities. Our guests were very gracious and generous too.

For everyone involved in the grant, the year is full of long hours and heavy workloads and so much responsibility. It was just such a great time for all of us to get together and congratulate one another, exchange our stories, our successes and challenges and to support one another. Too few Tlingit people speak the language fluently, but the one word we all know is Gunalchéesh or thank you. It's emblematic of the sentiments during that event how often the word was said and how many people learned it for the first time.

**Q: Tell us about planning menus and activities for the meeting. How did your team decide to share traditional foods and practices?**

A: We had many planning meetings and they were all full of enthusiasm, smiles, and laughter. We spent a long time discussing our culture night—the kick off for the event and the community tour—our opportunity for the town to present.

The first night of the week-long meeting was our culture night—a traditional foods potluck and then our cultural presentation of our traditional singing and dancing inside our tribal house. Our community really rolled out the red carpet. We had all of our key foods—salmon, deer, moose, hooligan, shrimp, crab, berries, seaweed and herring eggs. The fact that all of the food came from people's freezers and kitchens and that they were all making that personal contribution meant something big. Our Indigenous values of sharing and community are very strong here in Wrangell. My great aunt used to tell me that our foods taste better when we share them, and in this case we shared them with our own local Native community and with all of the other communities that were represented. The good feelings were palpable and dinner was delicious.



*Potluck with NDWP grantee partners. Courtesy of SEARHC.*

We had some time to practice our songs before the event,





*SEARHC staff members Lizzie Cabot (ABOVE) and Ken Hoyt (BELOW). Courtesy of SEARHC.*



and I owe a special thanks to Dancing Raven, Jessica Whitaker, who led our dance group that night in our newly rebuilt tribal house, known as the Shakes House. Our people used to live in immense red cedar houses and we are one of the few communities to have one left. In our culture, we invite guests from other communities so that they may witness and ratify the ceremonies of the hosts. The spring immediately preceding the traditional foods meeting had one of these ceremonies, the first of its size in a long time, wherein we dedicated the Shakes House with ceremony, gifts, fun, and feasting.

I was very clear with the traditional foods meeting attendees that they were fulfilling that traditional role as guests and helping our community by bearing witness to our new house and the cultural revival occurring in Wrangell. Their positive energy and presence was such a blessing for our tribe, especially their time spent within those red cedar walls.

During the tour we had the opportunity to present our garden project, canoe culture projects, our oldest and newest cedar and stone monuments, thereby illustrating the story of our community. We started the tour at our Petroglyph beach and then showed our ancient and more recent totem poles and house posts—our Mudshark Houseposts—carved in the 1700's, and our totem poles from the 1930's and also from the 1980's, and especially our new house from 2012 and 2013. I think people came away from Wrangell with a true sense of who we are.

**Q: What were some of the most memorable parts of the meeting?**

A: In between all of the blocked out, formally scheduled parts of the schedule were these beautiful interstitial moments of personal connection. We were able to open the Shakes house for an impromptu jam. We shared our local Tlingit songs with those from other traditions. It was just beautiful.

I especially enjoyed the chance to paddle some of our canoes with guests from landlocked communities who had never paddled before. That was just a great moment—fun for the paddlers and for the elders and spectators.





**Q: Will you share a bit about the traditional stickball game and how it brought together grantee partners, the NDWP staff, and local community?**

A: It was difficult to find a place to play; we don't have big sports fields in our town, just basketball courts. We were scouting locations well in advance and then finally chose a covered outdoor basketball court. A few kids were there

*Stickball game with grantee partners. Courtesy of SEARHC.*

when we showed up with our sticks and the fish, but they had their basketball. They chose to join our game and they had a blast and were pretty good at it! An important aspect of the game is that it is primarily a social game, it's more about having fun than it is about winning. To this end it also brought the women and men together in a fun and positive setting. Obviously it was very competitive but it was much more cooperative and communal than any Western team sport.

The town of Wrangell really supports its young athletes, especially basketball players. Hands down, the MVP for the game was Lizzie Romane. She played for the women's team and led them to victory every game. At the end she was awarded the fish to everyone's audible approval.

I know the size of our audience, almost twenty elders and children, was indicative of the community support. At first people were skeptical of something they had never heard of or seen, but once they got the hang of it, it really caught on. Our town was talking about how much fun we had for months afterward and some people want to make it a regular activity for Wrangell.

**Q: What was this experience like for local tribal members?**

A: We were pretty open with the whole conference process—advertising and getting the word out and inviting participation from the local Native community. Many people came to sit in on the presentations and many people lent a hand with at least one aspect of the event—food, dancing, and just being good hosts. People were proud to display our town and our culture for the visitors and I think that pride left a lasting impact.

Many people had their eyes opened by the presentations from other communities. Many people commented to me about the good ideas from other projects that we should include or aspire towards. From the other canoe tribes we gained some ideas for our canoe projects. From the other salmon tribes we gained ideas for our fish. From the other gardening tribes we learned quite a bit about community agriculture.



*Stickball game. Courtesy of SEARHC.*

In the end our little tribal community gained some formal and social connections with other communities and we expanded our horizons and sense of context within Indian Country. Realizing the connections between communities that don't get together very often was a powerful experience. Wrangell sees its fair share of tourism but very rarely do we get visitors like these.

**Q: Describe the importance of these types of gatherings and how they contribute to the food sovereignty movement.**

A: It's almost a slogan that we say "let the food bring us together." In our community, sharing the bounty is one of the primary community connections—our foods are an opportunity to bring generations together and bind families around the dinner table and connect them to other families when they share their bounty. What was significant about this event was that the foods connected our tribes to many others—there are Native people throughout the country who know exactly what our culture looks like, sounds like, and tastes like. It's easy for many Native communities to feel isolated from other communities or to feel a sense of remoteness, but gatherings like these show that's just an illusion. We are all very connected and gatherings like this are key to keeping those bonds strong.

Special thanks to Mr. Ken Hoyt for sharing his time and stories. To learn more about this project, please find contact information on page 54.







*Planting day. Photo courtesy of the Healthy Roots Project.*

## TRADITIONAL FOODS PROGRAM INTERVIEW

### Healthy Roots Project

#### Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians—North Carolina

The following is an interview with the Healthy Roots Project's Joseph (Joey) Owle from July 2014. The Healthy Roots Project is one of the NDWP's Traditional Foods Program grantee partners and is situated in the beautiful Smoky Mountains of Cherokee, North Carolina. This interview highlights traditional foods programming developed through the Healthy Roots Project, as well as a number of sustainable agriculture practices used by project staff.

**Q: Tell us a bit about your tribal community and the Healthy Roots Project.**

A: The Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians (EBCI) is located in western North Carolina and is nestled next to the Great Smoky Mountains National Park. Our boundary consists of about 56,000 acres and our tribe is just over 14,000 members strong.

The Healthy Roots Project began in 2009 with funding from the CDC's Traditional Foods Program grant. Our program consists of two main objectives to 1) increase the availability of traditional food, and 2) increase the awareness and use of traditional ways of being active.



Healthy Roots increases access to affordable, healthy traditional foods through several diverse activities as follows. The Cherokee Youth Garden (CYG) garden is a half-acre located at the Cherokee Mothertown, known as Kituwah, and is situated amongst more than 200 acres of other Cherokee farmers' plots. Healthy Roots employs five to 10 tribal youths each summer for an 8-week program where they gain job experience, learn how to grow traditional Cherokee crops organically, learn about local food systems, engage in the farm-related business (farm stand) as well as participate in activities to connect them with Cherokee culture, past and present. Healthy Roots will continue to work with the youth to develop their personal digital stories of what they have learned and gained from working in the CYG. The organic produce is sold at or below conventional prices, donated to events and food pantries, and provided to pregnant women and children free of charge through a voucher program. Along with the CYG, Healthy Roots is continuing work with the Cherokee Central Schools by partnering on a hydroponic lettuce project and facilitating an afterschool gardening club for the Beta Club members. In addition, Healthy Roots will host two food preservation classes for the community; work with Harrah's Cherokee Casino to provide a meal containing traditional foods to the participants of the Harvest Half Marathon; and work with the Great Smoky Mountains National Park to grow traditional crops in the Homestead Garden located at the Visitor's Center of the National Park.

For this summer's Cherokee Youth Garden program, we have incentivized fourteen youths to work in the gardens three days per week at four hours per day. During this time, gardeners will be exposed to gardening strategies centered on organic practices. These practices include 1) how to manage pest insect problems; 2) weeds issues; 3) organic fertilizer applications 4) pruning plants; 5) creating a crop rotation schedule; 6) maintaining a compost pile; and 6) identifying wild edibles in the garden, all while discovering a healthy, diverse, sustainable, soil ecosystem. We have hosted Mr. Tom Belt, Cherokee Nation member and tribal elder, to speak about the historical nature of the area in which the Cherokee Youth Garden is established, and we have hosted Mr. David Cozzo, a botanist with the North Carolina Cooperative Extension Service, to lead a walk around the farm to identify weeds and wild plants. Rose James, a Cherokee Choices team member, also has led several morning yoga sessions. These yoga sessions allow for a peaceful awakening for the gardeners before the day begins. To cool off at the end of a hot day, the garden is fortunately located next to a river. Water is essential for all life and we believe that the opportunity for the gardeners to go to water after working is a vital and healthy aspect of Cherokee culture. Not only are they getting to clean off the dirt and cool off, they are participating in a traditional form of activity.

Healthy Roots has also partnered with the Cherokee Middle School (CMS) Garden Club and the sixth grade science teacher during the school year. Healthy Roots staff visits the garden club every Tuesday and facilitates gardening and agricultural activities. These activities have included erecting and maintaining nine, twenty-four square foot raised garden beds. Over half of the space is used as a butterfly pollinator area and for cultivating heirloom variety crops. Students planted, watered, weeded, and consumed the food from their garden. Tastings were conducted as frequently as possible with food from the school garden or from the Cherokee Youth Garden.

CMS garden club members also assisted with the production of more than 300 heads of lettuce produced in the hydroponic system. Due to North Carolina Department of Agricultural guidelines, the lettuce unfortunately did not make it to the school cafeterias as part of the students' salad. However, the lettuce







was distributed to CMS garden club members, in the teachers' lounge, used for Healthy Roots events, shared amongst Cherokee Choices programs and donated to the Cherokee Boys Club Family Support Services program. Garden club members also learned about and demonstrated essential food handling and safety protocols necessary for fulfilling food safety standards.

Healthy Roots is also in the planning phase for hosting a trail run and collaborating with another tribal entity for a bike safety and ride event.

**Q: What traditional and locally grown foods are found in your program?**

A: Through our partnership with the North Carolina Cooperative Extension Office and the Cherokee Center for Plants, we received several heirloom varieties of crops that are now grown in the Cherokee Youth Garden. Extension agent Kevin Welch travelled to Tahlequah, Oklahoma, several years ago to participate in a seed exchange. Thanks to his efforts we now grow two heirloom pumpkin varieties, Cherokee Tan and Candy Roaster; white flour corn; and Trail of Tears beans. Our full list includes:

- Tomatoes
- Squash
- Pumpkins
- Corn
- Onions
- Kale
- Greens
- Carrots
- Sweet Potatoes
- White Potatoes
- Basil
- Lettuce
- Sunflowers
- Strawberries
- Green Beans
- Okra



*ABOVE: Aerial view of Cherokee Youth Garden. Previous page from top left: Bee pollination, youth harvesting mustard greens, Garden Club discussion on raised beds, and Cherokee Youth Garden Works Exchange with Great Smoky Mountains National Park. Photos courtesy of Healthy Roots Project.*





*Cherokee Youth Garden Kick-off Picnic. Photo courtesy of Healthy Roots Project.*

**Q: Describe some of the ways you use organic growing practices to cultivate traditional foods. Why is this method important when growing traditional foods?**

A: We do not use agricultural chemicals for our production practices. However, if we were to use any chemicals to control insect pests or crop disease, we would use only United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) National Organic Program (NOP)-approved controls. We plan to incorporate integrated pest management (IPM) practices this summer with our youth program. These practices include pheromone traps, buffer areas to increase the presence of beneficial insects, and crop rotation to avoid planting the same crop in one area for multiple years.

Our fertilizer strategy is a multifaceted approach. During the growing season, we will rely on top dressing with a slow-release organic fertilizer. In preparation, summer 2014 we sowed a fall cover crop of crimson clover to provide some fertilization and rye grass to increase the soils organic matter. For this season, we sowed a cover crop of buckwheat around the border for our plot to help control encroaching weeds, to increase soil organic matter, and increase the diversity of beneficial insects.

Our primary control for both insects and weeds are the youth gardeners themselves. Using organic chemical pesticides may become a necessity, as some insects, such as the Colorado potato beetle and Mexican Beetle, are too prolific for manual control. The youth gardeners pull Johnson grass and pick individual insects off of plants; proving beneficial to plant growth due to immediate action. The youth gardeners also learn about the physical labor required to maintain a productive garden. We employ the use of scuffle hoes to weed in between plants and along the edges of the row. This tool is practical and efficient and provides youth gardeners with some insight into how our relatives, living grandparents, and

ancestors once gardened.

We employ the cultural practice of crop rotation to improve soil fertility and prevent pest insect and disease complications. The gardeners learn about “heavy” and “light” feeders among crops and how to rotate various crop families to prevent an overconsumption of nutrients from one particular area in the garden. In addition to crop rotation, we employ the strategy of a trap crop. This refers to the small, localized planting of a crop away from the larger, main area of that crop to attract pest insects away from the larger planted area.

**Q: What are some of the ways you’ve incorporated traditional and locally grown foods into daily life and the local school system?**

A: Food produced at the Cherokee Youth Garden is mainly distributed via the farm stand at the local hospital. Food that is not sold at the farm stand is donated to a variety of programs, which includes the 1) Women, Infants and Children (WIC) program; 2) Cherokee Life Balance class; and 3) newly established Nurse Family Partnership program, which is an intensive home visiting program serving pregnant women and children.

Our work with the school includes raised garden beds, a hydroponic system used for lettuce production, and an adopted blueberry patch. We are able to incorporate the foods produced in these areas into our middle school garden club. The students are able to experience taste tests with foods they may not have ever tried before. We give the students surveys after the taste tests and give the data to the school nutritionist as a way to tailor the food offered for breakfast and lunch. Since the garden areas at the school are not Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) certified—a North Carolina Department of Agricultural law—we are not able to use the food for school meals. Lettuce produced in the hydroponic system is donated to teachers via the refrigerators in the teachers’ lounge in the elementary, middle, and high schools. Students are also encouraged to take lettuce home with them to furnish a meal for their family.

For the Cherokee Youth Garden summer program, we send gardeners home with the food that is grown in the garden so that they and their family can experience firsthand the benefits of growing their own food. By growing our food locally, we can also reduce the carbon footprint associated with acquiring food from across the country and from different parts of the world.

We also incorporate food grown from the garden into events that Healthy Roots holds. On Martin Luther King, Jr. Day of 2014, we were able to make a pumpkin soup with the pumpkins and onions from the garden to provide to our volunteers. For the hominy-making workshop we held in February, more than half the ingredients used in our chili came from the garden; another batch of pumpkin soup was also made for that event. Mustard greens were used in the meal prepared for the summer youth garden at the welcoming event in May 2014. Sweet potatoes were used to make biscuits for a taste test with the CMS Garden Club. Pumpkins, sweet potatoes, and mustard greens were used as the recovery snack by the Harrah’s Cherokee Casino and Hotel Chef staff for the annual Harvest Half Marathon and 5K, an event that attracted more than two hundred participants. When I asked the Cherokee Boys Club Family Support Services’ staff about the mustard greens we donate, we were informed that the families love them! While





*Cherokee Youth Garden Kick-off Picnic. Photo courtesy of Healthy Roots Project.*

the size of the Cherokee Youth Garden may be relatively small, the food that is grown there has reached the mouths of hundreds of people.

**Q: How do you envision your tribe's food sovereignty in the future? What are some of your short- and long-term goals?**

A: The Eastern Band of Cherokee's food sovereignty capacity has progressed over the years. Initiatives such as the "Chief Garden Kit" distribution, now in its 11th year, have increased tribal members' capacity to grown several heirloom crops and increase their garden diversity. The Healthy Roots Project provides youth with an experiential learning opportunity that either gives them the chance to garden for the first time or increases their knowledge of gardening, giving them a chance to share their experience.

Having attended the 2nd annual Food Sovereignty Summit in Wisconsin, hosted by the Oneida Nation, the motto of the conference really impacted me. It simply stated, "How sovereign are we... if we can't feed ourselves?" As our tribe progresses with gardening and agricultural initiatives, I would like to see all families and individuals of this tribe create their own garden. At least with their own garden, a family or individual would then be producing some of the food they consume within a year. The ultimate goal is







*Food Preservation Hominy Workshop. Photos courtesy of Healthy Roots Project.*

have all the food we consume in a year be produced within our boundary. It is a lofty goal, but nonetheless, a goal to strive towards.

Our primary short-term goal is to sustain our program. Without the Healthy Roots Project in Cherokee, youth will have one less opportunity to gain firsthand knowledge and skills that empower them to grow their own food. By speaking with the youth gardeners' parents, we encourage them to speak to their Tribal Council representative about the longevity of this program.

Additionally, I would like to see the structure of the youth garden be aligned with producing food more economically. While the design of the Cherokee Youth Garden has shapes that are symbolic to our people, it is often inefficient. In the years to come, it would be more economical and efficient to set-up the garden in straight rows. Uniformity is not a bad thing given the diversity of crops grown and management practices of weeds, fertilization, and cover crops.

One long-term goal is establishing a garden site at each of the seven communities in Cherokee. Creating a garden space for each community would provide some food throughout the year to elders of that community and/or families in need. We envision these garden spaces to be more than just a place to grow food, but also a place where community members can gather for recreation and relaxation.

Special thanks to Mr. Joseph (Joey) Owle for sharing his time and stories. To learn more about this project, please find contact information on page 54.







*William Seneca Administration Building with new native plant landscape. Photo courtesy of Food is Our Medicine (FIOM) project.*

## TRADITIONAL FOODS PROGRAM INTERVIEW Food is Our Medicine (FIOM)

Seneca Nation—New York

The following is an interview with Patricia Galeza of the Food Is Our Medicine (FIOM) project from August 2014. FIOM is a shared project between the Seneca Nation and Seneca Diabetes Foundation with a number of initiatives such as community gardens, a farmers market, an Elders' Circle, policies and resources on native plants, youth mentoring, and community outreach. As a result of the Food is Our Medicine project, the Seneca Nation is now the first AI/AN Nation to adopt a comprehensive Native Plant Policy. While FIOM is not a CDC Traditional Food Program grantee partner, the organization has been a model program on food sovereignty in Indian Country. This interview provides an overview of FIOM and their journey to developing policies and preserving practices that support traditional foods and plants.

**Q: The Food Is Our Medicine (FIOM) project is a partnership between the Seneca Nation and Seneca Diabetes Foundation. Share a bit about the original vision for FIOM and how it has evolved since its founding.**

**A:** For millennia, Native peoples' genetic makeup has been largely determined by the foods and medicines of their ancestors. It was their intimate connection with the land that sustained Native peoples and gave them vigor. Over the past few centuries, this relationship with the land and its bounty has been fractured.





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amanda.brainard@snf.org

*Flyer for Seneca Nation Farmers' Market. Courtesy of FIOM.*

Native peoples no longer rely upon the foods of their ancestors to provide them with strength: their diet is now filled with high concentrations of sugar, salt, and fat characteristic of modern eating habits. As a result, the good health and vigor of Native people have suffered and have led to unprecedented rates of nutrition-related diseases. The Indian Health Service of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services has stated that American Indians and Alaska Natives are 2.3 times more likely to have diabetes, as compared with the general population.<sup>1</sup>

The occurrence of diabetes among Native peoples is, unfortunately, mirrored by data from the Seneca Nation. The 2013 Seneca Nation Diabetes Report cites a diabetes rate of 19.7% in 2010, 19.5% in 2011, and 20.4% in 2012, as compared with a rate of 8.4% in New York State, and 6.4% in the United States as a whole. This extraordinarily high prevalence of type 2 diabetes among members of the Seneca community speaks not only to the potential for a diminished quality of life for those with

diabetes—including eye, foot, and skin complications; nerve damage; kidney disease; and lower limb amputation—but also to an increased likelihood of premature death from heart disease or stroke.

For youngsters at the Seneca Nation, the news is no better. Data from the Seneca Health System reveal that 23.9% of children at Allegany and 22.9% of children at Cattaraugus, have a Body Mass Index at the 85th percentile or greater, indicating either overweight or obesity. Recent data from the Seneca Nation Health System show that 5.7% of children ages five to twelve at the Cattaraugus Territory are diabetic, a rate many times the national average. Clearly, the youngest members of the Seneca Community are at risk for a lifetime of ill health if steps are not taken to reverse this alarming trend.

Since 2005 the Seneca Diabetes Foundation (SDF) has worked to fulfill its mission of providing education outreach, prevention awareness, and funding research to improve the lives of Seneca Nation members affected by type 2 diabetes. Funds raised by the Foundation have contributed toward the SDF Endowment at Women and Children's Hospital of Buffalo (New York), programs and technology for the Seneca Nation Health System (SNHS), and scholarships for Seneca students pursuing higher education in the fields of health and human services. SDF funding has provided two medically-equipped vans to transport dialysis patients for treatment, a pediatric and adult endocrinologist to treat adolescent and adult Seneca patients through the SNHS, state-of-the-art software for the SNHS to track the treatment of Seneca members

<sup>1</sup> National Diabetes Fact Sheet, 2011 (<http://www.cdc.gov/diabetes/pubs/pdf/ndfs>)



with diabetes, the down payment for a new ambulance at the Cattaraugus Territory, and the purchase of an optical retinal scanner for the SNHS.

In response to the crisis of type 2 diabetes and related health issues among its members, the Seneca Nation has joined with the Seneca Diabetes Foundation to establish the Food Is Our Medicine Project. The overall goal of FIOM is to restore the health and well-being of the Seneca Community by restoring culturally significant Native plant usage and reestablishing a culturally informed food system. A total of 44 Seneca Nation community leaders, directors, and department heads participated in the initial FIOM planning session meeting. In 2013, approximately 250 members of the Seneca Community participated in various FIOM-related activities.



*Flyer for Elders' Sharing Circle. Courtesy of FIOM.*

**Q: Describe some of the programs under FIOM. In your opinion, which program(s) is most well received in your community?**

A: Projects associated with Food Is Our Medicine have, as their overarching goal, a return to health for Seneca Nation members through the cultivation and consumption of Native species. If this were the only goal for FIOM, these efforts would, indeed, be praiseworthy. FIOM's vision is much more than this, however. By growing the traditional plants that have provided sustenance for the Seneca people since time immemorial, modern-day members can reconnect with Mother Earth and with the spirit of those who came before. To say that the roots of the Seneca people lie in the soil of their land is not merely an agricultural statement; it is a profound declaration of who the Seneca people are, of a proud heritage and an indomitable desire to return to the ways that will restore health and reaffirm cultural identity.

FIOM has undertaken projects at both the Allegany and Cattaraugus Territories. A garden has been planted at the Allegany Faithkeepers School. In addition, a Planting-to-Plate Initiative has been introduced at the Allegany Education Department. The goal of this initiative is to provide access to fresh fruit and vegetables, through planting and tending a community garden and instruction in fruit and vegetable preparation, so that youth enrolled in Education Department programming will have the knowledge and motivation to make half their mealtime plate consist of fruit and vegetables.

At the Cattaraugus Community Center, Norway maples have been removed and replaced with Native sugar maples, and fifteen raised beds have been established, along with one canning garden and one youth field garden. In addition, 93 individual vegetable seedlings have been planted—including four varieties of tomatoes, sweet and hot peppers, and eggplant—with an estimated total yield between 550 and 778 pounds. Average yield per plant was a minimum of six to eight and a quarter pounds per vegetable planted. Average yield for onions and carrots was between 15 and 20 pounds per four 10-foot rows. Seven different herbs and three varieties of annuals (Marigolds, Salvia, and Alyssum) have also been planted, along with Native and cultural plants (Wild Bergamot, Black-eyed Susan, and Sweetgrass).





*Farm stand at the Seneca Nation Farmers' Market. Courtesy of FIOM.*

At the Cattaraugus Territory's William Seneca Administration Building on the Cattaraugus Territory, all Eurasian species have been removed, 446 Native trees and shrubs have been planted, and a minimum of 25 different Native species have been reintroduced to the landscape. At the Cattaraugus Territory's Early Childhood Learning Center, ten classroom raised garden beds have been established, as well as 65 individual vegetable seedlings (grape tomatoes, peppers, eggplant, squash, and pumpkins), with an estimated yield of 454 pounds. Three varieties of annuals (Marigolds, Salvia, and Alyssum), five annual sunflowers, and a variety of cooking herbs have also been planted.

FIOM wants to do more than just establish community gardens; its goal is to have the Seneca Nation evolve into "a community that gardens." To date, over 40 individual participant gardens have been planted at Allegany, 35 at Cattaraugus, while 12 gardens have been planted by Seneca members residing in Buffalo. FIOM is not just about food: it is about leading a healthy lifestyle through physical activity. FIOM took an important step in this direction with its inaugural 5K Run/Walk, held last September as part of the Seneca Nation's 2013 Fall Festival. Approximately 75 runners took part, raising awareness about the benefits of being active for all ages. The success of the event led to the second Food Is Our Medicine 5K Run/Walk. Entitled Earth Run – Honoring Mother Earth, the run/walk was held on April 26, 2014, with 71 runners and walkers participating. The 5K has already become an institution, with a third event scheduled for the 2014 Seneca Nation Fall Festival. Proceeds from these events will fund future FIOM initiatives.

The Seneca Nation Farmers Market at the Cattaraugus Territory has been in existence since February of 2013, operating year-round on Tuesdays. Market vendors sell fresh produce in season, organically raised hormone-free nontraditional meats, dairy products, traditional herbs and spices, and other food items, drawing customers from the Cattaraugus Territory and surrounding communities. The Seneca Nation Farmers Market is unique among New York State markets in that its focus is on healthy choices in foods,



with emphasis on organic meats and fresh fruit and vegetables.

The availability of fresh fruit, vegetables, and meats can do much to reverse the trend of reliance on processed foods that are heavily laden with fat and empty calories by providing healthy foods at reasonable prices.

In addition to health issues among members of the Seneca Nation, data reveal significantly higher rates of poverty in the Nation's two residential territories than for the surrounding counties. The rate of poverty is estimated at 28.8% for the Allegany Territory and 28.1% for the Cattaraugus Territory, as compared with an average rate of 16.8% for the counties surrounding the territories. Poverty for individuals ages 65 and over is 13.1% at Allegany and an alarming 22.1% at Cattaraugus, while the average rate for comparable populations in the surrounding counties is 8.4%.

These data attest to the need for reasonably priced food items for Seneca members. Issues of poverty are further complicated by food accessibility considerations. Although there is a supermarket at the Seneca Nation's Allegany Territory, it has limited inventory and its merchandise is very expensive. There are no supermarkets at the Nation's Cattaraugus Territory; the nearest market is about eight miles away. This is especially problematic for elders of the Seneca Nation, many of whom lack their own transportation. Although bus service between the Allegany and Cattaraugus Territories has been instituted, issues of mobility may make this a less than satisfactory choice for many Seneca elders. In addition, the only sources for produce at either of the Seneca Nation residential territories have traditionally been small convenience stores that sell a limited variety of fruit and vegetable items at prices that are out of reach for many Seneca members, including elders on a fixed income.



*Sweetgrass. Courtesy of FIOM.*

Winter weather poses a challenge for access to food, especially for Seneca elders. In New York State's Southern Tier (where the Allegany and Cattaraugus Territories are located) snowfalls of one to two feet, and occasionally four feet or more, are common. Winter weather can begin as early as October and often lasts until the end of April. Such conditions can pose serious challenges for those with issues of mobility or transportation. To deal with these challenges, the Seneca Nation Farmers Market continues to provide easily accessible, affordable food throughout the year.

FIOM has a special commitment to the children of the Seneca Nation. On August 5, 2014, youngsters attending classes of the Early Childhood Learning Centers at the Allegany and Cattaraugus Territories participated in a reading of *Who Grew My Soup?*, the story of a young boy who refuses to eat until he knows the origin of the vegetables in the soup he's served. The book provides an important lesson for



*Garden plots. Courtesy of FIOM.*

young children about the sources of the food they eat.

The event was part of the 15th annual National Farmers Market Week. Participating children received veggie t-shirts and “Veggie Bucks” vouchers to use at either the Seneca Nation Farmers Market or the Salamanca Farmers Market at the Allegany Territory. In keeping with the theme of the book, youngsters were encouraged to buy fresh produce with their Veggie Bucks. The event was a great success, with over 200 children taking part, along with teachers, staff, and parents. By investing in the Nation’s children, FIOM works to instill in the youngest Seneca members an understanding of and a commitment to a lifetime of good health through healthy eating.

**Q: In March 2014, the Seneca Nation adopted the Native Plant Policy, the first indigenous plant policy in Indian Country. What steps did it take to develop the policy? Describe the role FIOM will play in supporting and implementing the policy.**

A: In the fall of 2013, the Seneca Nation of Indians unanimously approved a policy ensuring that new landscape planting in public spaces on Seneca lands will be exclusively comprised of local indigenous species. This new policy also encourages private Seneca landholders to choose local North American flora in their planting decisions. It has long been recognized that continued planting of nonnative species poses a significant threat to ecosystems and causes harm to the environment. The current Seneca Nation Council is committed to restoring, preserving, and maintaining local indigenous plants that are significant to the culture of the Seneca people and that help to maintain the balance of nature. Although the new policy applies exclusively to plants in public spaces, owners of private property at the Seneca Nation are highly encouraged to reintroduce Native species and remove invasive and introduced Eurasian plants. To guide planting decisions at the Seneca Nation, a recommended “No Planting List,” along with lists of Native plants of Allegany, Cattaraugus, and Chautauqua Counties, has been formulated.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> These lists and Seneca Nation’s Native Plant Policy can be found in the appendices of this report.



No other U.S. Native tribe has established and formally enacted an indigenous plant policy. In doing so, the Seneca Nation has demonstrated its commitment to continuing and expanding efforts to reintroduce Native species to Seneca territories. The Seneca Nation and its planting policy can serve as a model for other Native nations as they work to reintroduce the species that have, for so long, played a secondary role in the life and health of many indigenous peoples. With this new planting policy, the Seneca Nation has taken a substantial step forward in preserving Seneca culture and protecting and maintaining the community's ecological footprint.

This policy has been applauded by Dr. Jeremy Pinto, Research Plant Physiologist and Tribal Nursery Specialist with the Forest Service of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, who has stated: "While it should be well-ingrained in us to preserve and promote the plants that are significant to our respective cultures, a policy like this brings the issues of cultural preservation, invasive species, sustainability, and adaptability to the forefront of everyday management practices in a good way." Media sources that have featured the Native Plant Policy include ABC News, Fox Business News, The San Diego Union Tribune, the Native Nations Institute at the University of Arizona, and the Indian Country Today Media Network. Dissemination of information about the Native Plant Policy will provide other Native nations as well as non-Native communities with information and motivation to establish their own indigenous planting policy.



**Q: Tell us about the Elders' Circle and its importance in sharing and preserving traditional foodways and cultural knowledge.**

A: FIOM's Elders' Circle has been established to create a venue where elders can tell their story, sing songs, and share their traditional knowledge of plants that are significant to Seneca culture as edibles, dyes, medicines, ceremonial plants, and materials for building, hunting, tools, and baskets. Sharing through the Elders' Circle brings everyone together to work toward seventh generation sustainability, an ecological concept that urges the current generation to live sustainably and work for the benefit of the seventh generation into the future. This concept originated with the Great Law of the Iroquois, which holds that it is appropriate to think seven generations ahead and determine whether decisions made today will benefit children seven generations into the future. The notion of seventh generation sustainability transcends

tribal politics, reaching all generations, and aligning the community toward common goals. The Elders' Circle meets monthly and has addressed a wide variety of topics at its meetings, including maple sugaring, Native violets, wild onions, strawberries, and blueberries, indigenous basketry, herbal teas, and square foot gardening.

**Q: How do you envision Seneca Nation's food sovereignty in the future? What are some of FIOM's short and long term goals?**

A: The overarching goal of Food Is Our Medicine is to restore the health and wellbeing of the Seneca Nation community by reintroducing Native American food systems, Native models of nutrition, indigenous land management, and sustainable food production practices. A major component of this goal is to increase food sovereignty—the right of people to determine their own food policies—at the Seneca Nation through initiatives such as the white corn project. By growing, processing and preserving white corn, the Seneca Nation will take a significant step toward returning to a system incorporating one of the foods that for millennia formed the core of the traditional Native American diet. Also contributing to food sovereignty will be efforts to include healthy, natural food items at Seneca Nation convenience stores. A third initiative is the introduction of healthy snack options for vending machines in public buildings at the Allegany and Cattaraugus Territories. Initiatives such as these will contribute significantly to enable FIOM to:

- Create new partnerships, venues and experiences for exchange of information related to traditional Native foods and practices that support traditional food ways;
- Develop, adopt, and implement a Seneca Nation food policy that addresses how food is produced, processed, distributed, purchased, and recycled; and
- Empower Seneca families with the skills and knowledge to grow and harvest their own food and reconnect with their historic and cultural heritage.

Special thanks to Ms. Pat Galeza for sharing her time and stories. To learn more about this project, please find contact information on page 54. In addition, copies of the Seneca Nation's Native Plant Policy and supporting documents can be found in the Appendices of this report.





*The Oregon Coast (ABOVE). On next page from top left: Healthy Traditions Garden, eel cleaning, mussels, and gathering camas. Photos courtesy of the Healthy Traditions Project.*

## TRADITIONAL FOODS PROGRAM INTERVIEW

### Healthy Traditions Project

#### Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians—Oregon

The following is an interview with Sharla Robinson of the Healthy Traditions Project from September 2014. A grantee partner with the NDWP's Traditional Foods Program, the Healthy Traditions Project focuses on educating tribal members about the use of traditional foods. The project includes activities and trainings on traditional ways of eating, preparing, preserving, and gathering healthful foods, as well as hosting a culture camp for all ages.

**Q: Tell us a bit about your community and the Healthy Traditions Project.**

A: The Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians (CTSI) is a confederation of tribes from western Oregon. Our headquarters are in Siletz, OR, and we have Area Offices in Portland, Salem, and Eugene. When we received the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) Traditional Foods grant, we started a traditional foods program called Healthy Traditions. The CTSI Healthy Traditions project seeks to improve









*Harvesting in water (ABOVE). On next page: gathering traditional plants (ABOVE), huckleberry gathering and berries (BELOW).  
Courtesy of Healthy Traditions Project.*

the health of Siletz Tribal members through educational activities which promote the use of traditional foods.

**Q: What types of workshops and cooking classes do you offer community members? Are some more popular than others?**

A: We offer a range of classes, depending on what our community is requesting and resources available. We have sponsored classes for hunting, fishing, gathering, gardening, cooking, and food preservation. Our cultural classes are very popular, but these classes are harder to conduct because of scheduling, seasonality, weather, distance, physical difficulty; and they can be time consuming.

The tribe does not have one protected gathering site and we do not have recognized treaty rights, barriers to getting enough food for our community. Many of our families receive food assistance and eat a lot of processed foods. Our cooking and food preservation classes have been especially popular. We have to take gradual steps toward recovering our traditional food diet. If our families don't have enough food, there is a limit to how many healthy choices they can make. Over the course of this project, we collaborated to start the Siletz Food Pantry out of our local school to combat hunger. We have to make steps: food security, healthy food education, traditional food security, and traditional food education. We have made efforts in







all of these areas, but we truly need more access to our traditional foods if our families are going to make a regular change in their diet.

**Q: Will you share a bit about Culture Camp? What do children and youth enjoy most about the experience?**

A: Healthy Traditions began doing gathering trips and traditional foods cooking during Culture Camp and all ages love these activities. Culture Camp brings families together who may not come to Siletz at any other time. We primarily do activities located near Siletz; the ocean gathering is the most popular activity.

**Q: As your sixth year as a Traditional Foods Program grantee partner comes to a close, what are some of the most memorable experiences and accomplishments you've achieved through the Healthy Traditions Project?**

A: We have built community leadership, buy-in, and support for Healthy Traditions. Through our community meetings and outreach, our community sees the change this program has made—this is extraordinary for our people who are so often hopeless that they can change their situation. Our community wants to participate in our program, which is extraordinary for a diabetes and nutrition program.

We also have done some great sustainability planning with our community gardens, native plants garden, our USDA kitchen for nutrition education, Siletz Food Pantry, and educational materials.

Special thanks to Ms. Sharla Robinson for sharing her time and stories. To learn more about this project, please find contact information on page 54.





*Role playing with the Eagle Books. Courtesy of Indian Health Care Resource Center (IHCRC) of Tulsa.*

## SPECIAL HIGHLIGHT ON THE EAGLE BOOKS

# Building Community—Strengthening Traditional Ties

### Indian Health Care Resource Center of Tulsa—Oklahoma

The following is an interview with Kevin Heeney of the Indian Health Care Resource Center of Tulsa, Inc. (IHCRC) from July 2014. Established in 1976, the IHCRC is certified as a Medical Home by the Accreditation Association for Ambulatory Care, providing a number of health services to include health promotion and disease prevention. As an extension of these services, in 2008 IHCRC was awarded a





*Role playing with the Eagle Books. Courtesy of IHCRC.*

cooperative agreement with the NDWP's Traditional Foods Program as a grantee partner to establish the Building Community—Strengthening Traditional Ties program. In addition to community gardens and community outreach, a central component of this project was working with children and youth through summer camps. This interview highlights the use of the Eagle Books series—an initiative led by the CDC's NDWP—in the IHCRC's traditional foods programming.

**Q: Describe some of the ways you've incorporated the Eagle Books into your traditional foods activities and program. Have some activities worked better than others?**

A: We have incorporated the *Eagle Books* through a variety of outlets. First, we introduced them during our summer youth camps that focused on diabetes prevention and health promotion. We taught health lessons and the books created a fun and exciting way for the camp participants to learn about diabetes and the different prevention methods as well.

Secondly, we introduced them with the cooperation of the Choctaw Nation in our after-school program. Program participants went through a program where *Eagle Books* were read and supplemental lessons were also presented to the students. At the end of the program, the Choctaw Nation put on a live play featuring the characters and stories of the books.

Lastly, in conjunction with select schools in Tulsa, we provided sets and training on how to use the books. We also provided them the big books for use with total classrooms.

**Q: Overall, how well do you think the children in your community understand the health messages in the Eagle Books? Have you noticed children talking about the stories in daily life?**

A: At the time of incorporating the *Eagle Books* [into programming], I believe the students had understood the health meanings in each book. I think a few things that helped were how relatable the books were to

our kids as we were holding Native camps and programs. When the lessons were in story form, I think it helped the students stay interested in the health messages we were trying to get across. The supplemental material provided was great as well. I felt the interactive nature of the books really helped the students grasp how important it was, and how they can affect their lives by choosing the right foods and staying physically active. I especially saw the students react to the message in *Knees Lifted High*, when the students got to participate with the movements denoted in the book.

**Q: Has your program measured kids' responses and use of health messages from the Eagle Books?**

A: Not from the *Eagle Books* at this time. We did measure the program as a whole through pre- and post-tests and surveys, but not the *Eagle Books* individually. We did see an increase in knowledge and a change in their reported eating habits throughout the survey that showed favorable changes. We would be interested in the qualitative evaluation through the NDWP for extra evaluations.

**Q: Does there seem to be ongoing support for continuing the use of Eagle Books in your community? What role have tribal leaders played in supporting efforts?**

A: There does seem to be support for continuing the use of *Eagle Books* in Tulsa. I know that agencies and schools have mentioned them to me as well as nearby tribal nations. In Tulsa we are surrounded by different tribal nations, and the students we work with are from a wide variety of nations. I know there has been an increased push, such as the Choctaw Nation and Cherokee Nation who have been utilizing the *Eagle Books* with their tribes. Overall, I believe the Tulsa area Native tribes see the need for the books, as well as the value in teaching these messages and how effective it is for the youth.

Special thanks to Mr. Kevin Heeney for sharing his time and stories. To learn more about this project, please find contact information on page 54.





*Camp Colley. Courtesy of NATIVE HEALTH.*

## SPECIAL HIGHLIGHT ON THE EAGLE BOOKS Living Well Traditionally (LWT) Diabetes Prevention Youth Camp NATIVE HEALTH—Arizona

The following is an interview with NATIVE HEALTH's Susan Levy from October 2014. Founded in 1978, NATIVE HEALTH is located in Phoenix, Arizona, and was formerly known as the Native American Community Health Center, Inc. NATIVE HEALTH provides a range of patient-centered and culturally sensitive health care including primary, pediatric, prenatal, women's health, podiatry, optometry, diabetes and chronic care management, and integrated behavioral health. Ms. Levy serves as communications coordinator and oversees volunteer and community projects. While NATIVE HEALTH is not a CDC Traditional Food Program partner grantee, the organization is a wonderful example for incorporating traditional foods and cultural knowledge into programming with youth and families. This interview highlights the Living Well Traditionally (LWT) Diabetes Prevention Summer Youth Camp, a special project hosted by the NATIVE HEALTH Diabetes Education Program in June 2014.



**Q: Tell us about the 2014 Diabetes Prevention Youth Camp and the youth who participate.**

A: NATIVE HEALTH's Living Well Traditionally (LWT) Diabetes Prevention Youth Camp is an educational program targeting Native American youth who are at risk for developing type 2 diabetes and provides the tools necessary for reducing risk for the onset of diabetes. The Camp's purpose is to educate Native American youth about diabetes and prevention. The Camp strives to promote healthier living and positive lifestyle changes.

The LWT Diabetes Prevention Youth Camp began in 2001, and grows steadily each year. The program works to promote healthy living and overall wellness through food portion control, education, self-esteem presentations and incorporating the importance of daily physical activity. The youths are organized in groups of 15 with team leaders, and rotate each day through various activities and classes; there is time designated between classes for healthy snacks and crafts.

In 2014, 93 Native American youth attended the camp. The children came from Arizona and neighboring states, ages nine through 12. The goal of the camp is to educate the youth about health disparities and ways in which they can maintain overall health and wellness. Physical activity, diabetes education, self-esteem classes, and traditional Native American arts and crafts are some of the examples of what the summer program offers. NATIVE HEALTH conducts a pre- and post-test about diabetes and health during the camp.

Overall, campers gain confidence and self-esteem resulting in enthusiasm for adopting healthy lifestyle habits. Youth are also encouraged to take pride in their Native American heritage in order to assure positive self-worth and adoption of a healthy lifestyle.



*Campers riding mountain bikes (ABOVE). Camp Colley (BELOW). Photos courtesy of NATIVE HEALTH.*







*Campers learning traditional activities. Photo courtesy of NATIVE HEALTH.*

**Q: What are some of the ways you incorporate nutrition, physical activity, and self-esteem into diabetes prevention activities and education during the camp?**

A: Participants spend almost half of each day participating in organized physical activities such as horseback riding, canoeing, hiking, archery, and more. Educational and other activities comprise about 30 percent of their time, which includes: 1) nutrition education (healthy snack preparation, portion control, sugar content, label reading, diabetes, and healthy food games); 2) traditional arts and crafts (building self-esteem through traditional activities); and 3) storytelling. All activities were available every day and each group rotates through the activities; by the end of the camp, all children have rotated through all activities. NATIVE HEALTH asked for healthy meals to be prepared by the camp cook. Healthy snacks such as carrots were given to children. NATIVE HEALTH's Health Promotion/Disease Prevention (HP/DP) Director was also on site to help guide some of the health promotion/disease prevention activities.

**Q: There seems to be something offered for everyone at the camp. Will you share a bit about the group cooking and nutrition activities?**

A: NATIVE HEALTH strives to provide an amazing camp experience. Much thought and planning goes into the camp based on feedback from the previous year. Campers were able to help with some evening cooking as well as snacks. Nutrition education took place after lunch and dinner and activities included sugar content in drinks (soft drinks, juice, milk, water, tea, etc.), portion control, physical exercise, self-esteem, and more. Children are always amazed at how much sugar is in drinks. They always remark that they will go home and encourage their families to stop drinking soda, increase physical activity, and partake in healthier living.



**Q: For the 2014 camp, Native Health partnered with Kauffman and Associates Inc. (KAI) to provide diabetes prevention education using the Eagle Books series. How did this partnership come about?**

A: KAI reached out to NATIVE HEALTH regarding the distribution of the *Eagle Books* series. NATIVE HEALTH had used the books before and knew they were well done and that the children liked them, and more importantly, that they would read them and learned something. Each camper received a full set of books and was able to take them home and share them with their family. Many youths said they loved the books and couldn't wait to take them home and read them to their parents and reinforce a healthy lifestyle. They know change begins with them.

**Q: What did the youth think about health messages in the Eagle Books? Is support offered to help youth sustain the health behaviors they learned during the camp?**

A: Reinforcing health messages is important. NATIVE HEALTH provided pre- and post-test surveys evaluating the impact the summer program had on the youth who attended. The following were post-test results from the youth: 1) 40 percent conveyed an interest/will to join school sports; 2) 30 percent of the youths wanted to change their eating habits; 3) 90 percent of the campers knew they needed to change their eating habits; 4) 25 percent of the youths expressed increased self-esteem; 5) 50 percent of the youths



*Photo courtesy of NATIVE HEALTH.*



demonstrated a greater knowledge of diabetes; and 6) 50 percent of the youths expressed more interest in daily physical activity.

The *Eagle Books* reinforced the children's knowledge and will encourage them and their family to stay on the path of healthy living. The youth loved the books and even read them by flashlight in their tents. Many of them said the books would help them talk to their families about staying healthy.

NATIVE HEALTH provides opportunities for families to sustain healthy behaviors, from visits with the Diabetes Educator to participating in the Chronic Disease Self-Management classes and the new Community Health Worker program that works with individuals who have diabetes and/or hypertension. In addition, NATIVE HEALTH has a community garden located across the street from the clinic. This garden encourages families to come out, learn about healthy eating, gardening, physical activity and more. This adds additional reinforcement to a healthy lifestyle.

**Q: Independently and in partnership, Native Health and KAI have provided services and health programming to Native American communities for more than a decade. What are some of the most important lessons learned in developing diabetes prevention programs for Native youth?**

A: Start with the youngsters so they bring change to the families. Children are easier to adapt to change! We have heard from many of our families that the youth go home and tell their parents not to drink Thirstbusters (or some sort of soft drink) because it contains too much sugar and may lead to diabetes. Repetition works!

NATIVE HEALTH's mission is to provide holistic, patient-centered, culturally sensitive health and wellness services, and the vision is "Healthy People in Healthy Communities." NATIVE HEALTH has learned that this Camp is a valuable community program and the children and families look forward to participating in this program. Many youth come back years later and tell us how it made a difference in their life.

Special thanks to Ms. Susan Levy for sharing her time and stories. To learn more about this project, please find contact information on page 54.



*Mike Tryon, director of the Community Health Program at Salish Kootenai College (SKC), shares the Eagle Books with children. Courtesy of the SKC Community Health Program.*

## SPECIAL HIGHLIGHT ON THE EAGLE BOOKS

### Community Health Program

### Salish Kootenai College—Montana

The following is an interview with Mike Tryon of the Community Health Program at Salish Kootenai College (SKC) in Pablo, Montana. The Community Health Program was awarded a cooperative agreement as a grantee partner with the NDWP'S Traditional Foods Program, and primarily serves children and youth from tribal communities in the area. Through several projects—Making Fitness Fun, Native Games, and Healthy Head-start—the Community Health Program at SKC provides summer meals, activities, and year-round programs for hundreds of children and youths each year.

**Q: Tell us a bit about your community and the children and youth you serve through your programs.**

**A:** Our Community Health program at Salish Kootenai College involves working with children and youth ages three to eighteen. Big parts of our program involve traditional games (Native Games), physical



activity, health education, and nutritional messaging. One of our programs, Healthy Head-start, involves working with early childhood services. We use *Eagle Books* as part of our curriculum to teach youth the importance of physical activity and eating healthy. We work with 13 different Head Start programs and close to 200 children who are getting curriculum in health, nutrition, the CDC *Eagle Books*, gardening, and physical activities. Our other programming involves a summer physical activity/summer feeding program called Making Fitness Fun. We work with youth seven to nineteen years of age, providing physical activities and healthy breakfasts and lunches from June until the end of August, about 40 days of physical activities. We are able to keep more than 100 to 150 youth busy during the summer.

Another important part of our activities is our Native Games program, through which we host more than 20 different activities year-round involving youth and families. Our Native Games program involves teaching people the importance of Native and traditional games for increasing physical fitness, history, and teaching individuals the importance of respect. There are a lot of stories of Native games in history and the importance of them in Native culture.



*Sharing stories from the Eagle Books with children.  
Courtesy of SKC's Community Health Program.*

**Q: What role do traditional and healthful foods play in your programs?**

A: We teach children and youth in our programs about many of the traditional foods that Natives used to eat, how many of the Natives were hunters and gatherers. We also talk to the youth about how fit and active Native Americans used to be. Through our health education we show that processed foods, foods high in sugar, and lack of physical activities are making youth less healthy. We have incorporated traditional foods in our feeding program—through our Making Fitness Fun program—serving two meals a day for more than 40 days in the summer. We also try to serve youth lean proteins and fresh fruit and vegetables, and avoid serving juices.

**Q: What is your favorite thing about teaching and modeling nutrition and physical activity with Native children and youth?**

A: We enjoy seeing how much the youth enjoy many of the games we play with them. We make the games fun to encourage youth that being healthy is enjoyable. We also enjoy seeing youth improve their knowledge of health education in all of our programs. We hear from parents that youth are telling them what healthy and unhealthy foods are at home.



**Q: Describe some of the ways you've incorporated the Eagle Books into your traditional foods activities and program.**

A: The *Eagle Books* are very popular in our Healthy Head-start curriculum. The youth really enjoy the stories behind them. With the early childhood participants, we are able to take the important messages from the pictures and convey them to the children so they can

understand better. We found out with Head Start children that the stories can be too long, so we focus on using the pictures from the book and cutting down the amount of information. At the beginning of each session, we take one of the four *Eagle Books* and cover the important messages from the book.

**Q: Overall, how well do you think the children in your community understand the health messages in the Eagle Books?**

A: I think it depends on the age. With our Head Start children, the amount of material is overwhelming, so we were able to cut down the amount of words. It would be nice to see CDC create another series of books, so that much younger children can enjoy the books as well.

**Q: Has your program measured kids' responses and use of health messages from the Eagle Books?**

A: We did create a pre- and post-test about healthy education gained over the six-month Healthy Head-start health curriculum. Some of the questions we asked are: 1) Should you eat unhealthy foods or junk foods every day? 2) Should you eat a lot of fruits and vegetables every day? 3) Should you drink a lot of pop and juice every day? 4) Should you play a lot outside every day? 5) Should you watch TV or play a lot of video games every day? 6) Are foods from gardens healthy? and 7) Should you drink a lot of water every day? We are able to see changes in the youths' responses pre- and post-testing, showing improvements in health knowledge.

Special thanks to Mr. Mike Tryon for sharing his time and stories. To learn more about this project, please find contact information on page 54.



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\*Indicates Traditional Foods Program grantee partner through the CDC's Native Diabetes Wellness Program.

^Indicates other food sovereignty communities and programs in Indian Country.

# ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

**Traditional Foods Program - Native Diabetes Wellness Program  
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention**

[www.cdc.gov/diabetes/projects/ndwp/traditional-foods.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/diabetes/projects/ndwp/traditional-foods.htm)

**American Indian Institute - The University of Oklahoma**

[www.iii.ou.edu](http://www.iii.ou.edu)

**Native American Foods and Health Program - First Nations Development Institute**

[www.firstnations.org/programs/foods-health](http://www.firstnations.org/programs/foods-health)

**Indigenous Food and Agriculture Initiative (IFAI) – University of Arkansas School of Law**

[www.law.uark.edu/ifai/](http://www.law.uark.edu/ifai/)

**National Indian Health Board**

[www.nihb.org/public\\_health/ndwp.php](http://www.nihb.org/public_health/ndwp.php)

**Indian Health Service - Division of Diabetes Treatment and Prevention**

[www.ihs.gov/MedicalPrograms/Diabetes](http://www.ihs.gov/MedicalPrograms/Diabetes)



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## SENECA NATION OF INDIANS

### POLICY ON USAGE OF INDIGENOUS PLANT SPECIES IN LANDSCAPING



The Seneca Nation of Indians (SNI) recognizes that continued planting of non-Native species at Seneca Nation Territories poses a significant threat to the ecosystems of SNI Territories, causing harm to the environment as well as to the health of those who reside on or visit Seneca lands; and

The Seneca Nation of Indians is committed to restoring, preserving, and maintaining local indigenous species in its Territories in order to protect the environment and remain true to the legacy of the ancestors and the gifts of Mother Earth; and following a presentation by the Food Is Our Medicine program and Planning Department staff, the Council has determined that it is in the best interest of the Nation and its members to adopt a Policy to ensure that new plantings in public spaces on Nation lands will be exclusively local indigenous species, and to encourage private Seneca land holders to choose indigenous species in their planting decisions.

#### Principles

- I. All future development(s) of public spaces on Seneca Nation territory, including lands made available to corporations directly or indirectly owned by the Nation, will incorporate landscaping designs limited to Native indigenous plants of the Seneca people and the Western New York State region.
- II. Native plant species will be indigenous to WNY to include the following Counties:
  1. Allegany
  2. Cattaraugus
  3. Chautauqua
  4. Erie
  5. Genesee
  6. Niagara
  7. Orleans
  8. Wyoming
- III. Native species are those plants locally indigenous to the Western New York region to include the above mentioned eight (8) counties prior to European settlement.
- IV. Many indigenous plant species are significant to the culture of the Seneca people and their revitalization on Seneca lands is an important aspect of the preservation of Seneca culture. Use of indigenous plants includes and is not limited to:
  - (1) **Edible** Plants
    - (a) Crops, roots, nuts, seeds, fruit, leaves



- (b) Beverages
- (c) Seasonings
- (d) Candy
- (2) Plants used for **Medicines**
  - (a) See attached list: *Indigenous Medicine Plants of the Iroquois*
- (3) Plants used to produce **Fiber** and **Dyes**
  - (a) Cordage
  - (b) Basketry
  - (c) Bedding, mats, rugs
  - (d) clothing
- (4) Plants used in **Ceremonies**
- (5) **Other**
  - (a) Hunting and fishing: bows, arrows, traps, lures, lines, rods, arrows, spears
  - (b) Tools, utensils, cordage, basketry, containers, toys
  - (c) Fuel
  - (d) Fragrance
  - (e) Musical instruments

V. It is imperative to maintain and periodically update an "Advisory Invasive Plant List," also known as a "No-Planting List," of banned non-Native, Eurasian, commercial varieties and cultivated landscape plants, invasive or potentially invasive species. Plants on the "No-Planting List" may not be incorporated in the landscaping of any public spaces and in or around any Seneca Nation public building located on Seneca Territories. Nation programs, including housing related programs, shall discourage individuals from incorporating such species in their landscaping programs.

VI. This Policy does not mandate the removal of any existing landscaping plans incorporating "No-Planting" listed species. The Seneca Nation, however, highly encourages the prompt removal of any of the following "highly invasive" or "very highly invasive" species (indicated by \*) from Nation lands. An abbreviated no-planting list follows:

<i>Botanical Name</i>	<i>Common Name</i>
<i>Acer platanoides</i>	Norway Maple*
<i>Acer pseudoplatanus</i>	Sycamore Maple*
<i>Berberis thunbergii</i>	Japanese Barberry*
<i>Celastrus orbiculatus</i>	Oriental Bittersweet*
<i>Elaeagnus umbellata</i>	Autumn Olive*

<i>Euonymus alatus</i>	Burning Bush/Winged Euonymus*
<i>Lonicera japonica</i>	Japanese Honeysuckle*
<i>Lonicera maackii</i>	Amur Honeysuckle*
<i>Phalaris arundinacea</i>	Reed Canary-grass*
<i>Picea abies</i>	Norway Spruce
<i>Picea pungens</i>	Colorado Spruce
<i>Pinus nigra</i>	Austrian Pine
<i>Prunus serrulata</i>	Kwanzan Cherry
<i>Prunus subhirtella</i>	Flowering Cherry
<i>Pseudotsuga menziesii</i>	Douglas Fir
<i>Robinia pseudoacacia</i>	Black Locust*
<i>Rosa multiflora</i>	Multiflora Rose*
<i>Spiraea japonica</i>	Japanese Spirea
<i>Vinca minor</i>	Common Periwinkle

- VII. This Policy also establishes an approved list of regional Native species and Native plants significant to the Haudenosaunee culture that shall be permitted to be purchased, propagated, planted, landscaped, or introduced on any and all Seneca Territories.

The □Advisory Invasive Plant List, □also known as the □*No-Planting List*, □and the □*Encouraged Plant List* □are to be considered works in progress.



BOTANICAL NAME	COMMON NAME		Invasive
<i>Abies concolor</i>	White Fir	Evergreen	
<i>Abies fraseri</i>	Fraser Fir	Evergreen	
<i>Abies koreana</i>	Korean Fir	Evergreen	
<i>Abies lasiocarpa</i>	Alpine Fir	Evergreen	
<i>Acer griseum</i>	Paper Bark Maple	Tree	
<i>Acer japonicum</i>	Downy Japanese Maple	Tree	
<i>Acer palmatum</i>	Smooth Japanese Maple	Tree	
<i>Acer platanoides</i>	Norway Maple	Tree	Very High
<i>Acer pseudoplatanus</i>	Sycamore Maple	Tree	High
<i>Acer shirasawanum</i>	Shirasawa's Japanese Maple	Tree	
<i>Achillea x</i>	Hybrid Yarrow	Herbaceous	
<i>Ailanthus altissima</i>	Tree of Heaven	Tree	
<i>Ajuga reptans</i>	Bugleweed	Herbaceous	
<i>Alliaria petiolata</i>	Garlic Mustard	Herbaceous	Very High
<i>Ampelopsis brevipedunculata</i>	Porcelain Berry	Vine	High
<i>Anemone sylvestris</i>	Snowdrop Japanese Anemone	Herbaceous	
<i>Anemone tomentosa</i>	Japanese Anemone	Herbaceous	
<i>Anthriscus sylvestris</i>	Wild Chervil	Herbaceous	High
<i>Aquilegia x</i>	Hybrid Columbine	Herbaceous	
<i>Aralia elata</i>	Japanese Angelica Tree	Tree	Very High
<i>Artemisia vulgaris</i>	Mugwort	Herbaceous	High
<i>Arthraxon hispidus</i>	Small Carpgrass	Grass -Sedge	High
<i>Asarum europaeum</i>	European Ginger	Herbaceous	
<i>Berberis thunbergii</i>	Japanese Barberry	Shrub	Very High
<i>Brachypodium sylvaticum</i>	Slender False Brome	Grass -Sedge	Very High
<i>Buxus hybrid 'Green Gem'</i>	Green Gem Boxwood	Broadleaf evergreen	
<i>Buxus hybrid 'Green Mountain'</i>	Green Mountain Boxwood	Broadleaf evergreen	
<i>Buxus hybrid 'Green Velvet'</i>	Green Velvet Boxwood	Broadleaf evergreen	
<i>Buxus microphylla var. japonica 'Green Beauty'</i>	Green Beauty Boxwood	Broadleaf evergreen	
<i>Buxus microphylla var. koreana 'Winter Gem'</i>	Winter Gem Boxwood	Broadleaf evergreen	
<i>Buxus sempervirens</i>	Common Boxwood	Broadleaf evergreen	
<i>Cabomba caroliniana</i>	Carolina Fanwort	Herbaceous	High
<i>Calamagrostis acutiflora 'Karl Foerster'</i>	Karl Foerster Feather Reed Grass	Grass -Sedge	
<i>Cardamine impatiens</i>	Narrowleaf Bittercress	Herbaceous	High
<i>Carex morrowii</i>	Japanese Sedge	Grass -Sedge	
<i>Cedrus atlantica</i>	Atlas Cedar	Evergreen	
<i>Cedrus deodara</i>	Deodar Cedar	Evergreen	
<i>Celastrus orbiculatus</i>	Oriental Bittersweet	Vine	Very High
<i>Centaurea jacea</i>	Brown Knapweed	Herbaceous	
<i>Centaurea nigra</i>	Black/Common Knapweed	Herbaceous	
<i>Centaurea stoebe ssp.</i>	Spotted Knapweed	Herbaceous	High
<i>Cercidiphyllum japonicum</i>	Katsura Tree	Tree	

BOTANICAL NAME	COMMON NAME		Invasive
<i>Cercis canadensis</i>	Redbud	Tree	
<i>Chamaecyparis nootkatensis</i>	Alaskan Cedar	Evergreen	
<i>Chamaecyparis obtusa</i>	Hinoki Cypress	Evergreen	
<i>Chamaecyparis pisifera</i>	Sawara Japanese Cypress	Evergreen	
<i>Chamaecyparis thyoides</i>	Atlantic White Cedar	Evergreen	
<i>Chionanthus virginicus</i>	Fringetree	Tree	
<i>Cirsium arvense</i>	Canada Thistle	Herbaceous	High
<i>Clematis terniflora</i>	Japanese Virgin's-bower	Vine	High
<i>Coreopsis grandiflora</i>	large-flowered tickseed	Herbaceous	
<i>Coreopsis lanceolata</i>	Lance-leaved Tickseed	Herbaceous	
<i>Coreopsis major</i>	Greater Tickseed	Herbaceous	
<i>Coreopsis rosea</i>	Rose Coreopsis	Herbaceous	
<i>Coreopsis tinctoria</i>	Golden Tickseed	Herbaceous	
<i>Coreopsis verticillata</i>	Whorled Coreopsis	Herbaceous	
<i>Cornus kousa</i>	Chinese Kousa Dogwood	Tree	
<i>Cornus nuttallii</i>	Pacific Dogwood	Tree	
<i>Cotinus coggygria</i>	Smokebush	Tree	
<i>Crataegus crus-galli inermis</i>	Thornless Hawthorn	Tree	
<i>Crataegus monogyna</i>	Single-seeded Hawthorn	Tree	
<i>Crataegus phaenopyrum</i>	Washington Hawthorn	Tree	
<i>Cryptomeria japonica</i>	Japanese Cedar	Evergreen	
<i>Cynanchum louiseae</i>	Black swallow-wort	Herbaceous	Very High
<i>Cynanchum rossicum</i>	Pale Swallow-wort	Herbaceous	Very High
<i>Cytisus scoparius</i>	Scotch Broom	Shrub	
<i>Deschampsia cespitosa</i>	Tufted Hairgrass	Grass -Sedge	
<i>Didymosphenia geminata</i>	Rock Snot (diatom)	Herbaceous	
<i>Dioscorea polystachya</i>	Chinese Yam	Herbaceous	High
<i>Dipsacus laciniatus</i>	Cut-leaf Teasel	Herbaceous	High
<i>Echinacea pallida</i>	Pale-purple Coneflower	Herbaceous	
<i>Echinacea purpurea</i>	Eastern Purple Coneflower	Herbaceous	
<i>Egeria densa</i>	Brazilian Waterweed	Herbaceous	High
<i>Elaeagnus umbellata</i>	Autumn Olive	Shrub	Very High
<i>Euonymus alatus</i>	Burning Bush/Winged Euonymus	Shrub	Very High
<i>Euonymus alatus 'Compacta'</i>	Dwarf Burning Bush	Broadleaf evergreen	
<i>Euonymus fortunei</i>	Winter Creeper	Broadleaf evergreen	High
<i>Euonymus japonica</i>	Japanese Spindle Euonymus	Broadleaf evergreen	
<i>Euphorbia cyparissias</i>	Cypress Spurge	Herbaceous	High
<i>Euphorbia esula</i>	Leafy Spurge	Herbaceous	High
<i>Fagus sylvatica</i>	European Beech	Tree	
<i>Fallopia japonica</i>	Japanese Knotweed	Herbaceous	Very High
<i>Festuca ovina</i> var. <i>glauca</i> 'Elijah Blue'	Elijah Blue Fescue	Grass -Sedge	
<i>Fothergilla gardenii</i>	Dwarf Fothergilla	Shrub	



BOTANICAL NAME	COMMON NAME		Invasive
<i>Fothergilla major</i>	Tall Fothergilla	Shrub	
<i>Frangula alnus</i>	Smooth Buckthorn	Shrub	High
<i>Gaura biennis</i>	Biennial Gaura	Herbaceous	
<i>Gaura coccinea</i>	Scarlet Gaura	Herbaceous	
<i>Gaura lindheimeri</i>	Gaura	Herbaceous	
<i>Gleditsia triacanthos inermis</i>	Thornless Honeylocust	tree	
<i>Genista lydia</i>	Lydia Broom/Spanish Gorse	Shrub	
<i>Glyceria maxima</i>	Tall Glyceria	Grass -Sedge	High
<i>Hakonechloa macro</i>	Japanese Forest Grass	Grass -Sedge	
<i>Heptacodium miconioides</i>	Seven-son Flower	Shrub	
<i>Heracleum mantegazzianum</i>	Giant Hogweed	Herbaceous	High
<i>Humulus japonicus</i>	Japanese Hops	Herbaceous	High
<i>Hydrilla verticillata</i>	Water Thyme	Herbaceous	Very High
<i>Hydrocharis morsus-ranae</i>	Common Frogbit	Herbaceous	Very High
<i>Ilex crenata</i>	Japanese Holly	Broadleaf evergreen	
<i>Ilex meserveae</i>	Blue Holly	Broadleaf evergreen	
<i>Imperata cylindrica</i>	Cogon Grass	Grass -Sedge	High
<i>Iris pseudacorus</i>	Yellow Iris	Herbaceous	High
<i>Juniperus chinensis</i>	Chinese Juniper	Evergreen	
<i>Juniperus communis 'Gold Cone'</i>	Gold Cone Juniper	Evergreen	
<i>Juniperus procumbens 'Nana'</i>	Dwarf Japanese Garden Juniper	Evergreen	
<i>Juniperus scopulorum</i>	Rocky Mountain Juniper	Evergreen	
<i>Juniperus squamata</i>	Himalayan Juniper	Evergreen	
<i>Juniperus squamata 'Blue Star'</i>	Blue Star Juniper	Evergreen	
<i>Larix decidua</i>	European Larch	Evergreen	
<i>Lepidium latifolium</i>	Broad-leaf Pepper-grass	Herbaceous	High
<i>Lespedeza cuneata</i>	Chinese Lespedeza	Herbaceous	High
<i>Leucothoe axillaris</i>	Coast Leucothoe	Broadleaf evergreen	
<i>Leucothoe fontanesiana</i>	Dwarf Leucothoe	Broadleaf evergreen	
<i>Ligustrum obtusifolium</i>	Border Privet	Shrub	High
<i>Lonicera japonica</i>	Japanese Honeysuckle	Vine	Very High
<i>Lonicera maackii</i>	Amur Honeysuckle	Shrub	Very High
<i>Lonicera morrowii (incl. xbella)</i>	Morrow's Honeysuckle	Shrub	Very High
<i>Ludwigia grandiflora spp. hexapetala</i>	Uruguayan Primrose-willow	Herbaceous	Very High
<i>Ludwigia peploides</i>	Floating Primrose Willow	Herbaceous	Very High
<i>Ludwigia peploides spp. glabrescens</i>	Floating Primrose-willow	Herbaceous	Very High
<i>Lysimachia vulgaris</i>	Garden Loosestrife	Herbaceous	High
<i>Lythrum salicaria</i>	Purple Loosestrife	Herbaceous	Very High
<i>Magnolia sieboldii</i>	Oyama Magnolia	Tree	
<i>Magnolia stellata</i>	Star Magnolia	Tree	
<i>Magnolia virginiana</i>	Sweetbay Magnolia	Tree	
<i>Magnolia x</i>	Hybrid Magnolia	Tree	

BOTANICAL NAME	COMMON NAME		Invasive
<i>Mahonia aquifolium</i>	Oregon Grapeholly	Broadleaf evergreen	
<i>Malas</i> cv.	Crabapple cultivars	Tree	
<i>Malus baccata</i>	Chinese Crabapple	Tree	
<i>Malus floribunda</i>	Japanese Crabapple	Tree	
<i>Malus sargentii</i>	Sargent Crabapple	Tree	
<i>Metasequoia glyptostroboides</i>	Dawn Redwood	Evergreen	
<i>Microstegium vimineum</i>	Japanese Stilt Grass	Grass -Sedge	Very High
<i>Miscanthus sinensis</i>	Maiden Grass	Grass -Sedge	
<i>Miscanthus sinensis</i>	Chinese Silver Grass	Grass -Sedge	High
<i>Monarda</i> x	Hybrid Beebalm	Herbaceous	
<i>Murdannia kelsak</i>	Marsh Dewflower	Herbaceous	High
<i>Myriophyllum aquaticum</i>	Parrot-feather	Herbaceous	High
<i>Myriophyllum heterophyllum</i>	Broadleaf Water-milfoil	Herbaceous	Very High
<i>Myriophyllum spicatum</i>	Eurasian Water-milfoil	Herbaceous	Very High
<i>Nandina domestica</i>	Heavenly Bamboo	Shrub	
<i>Nymphoides peltata</i>	Yellow Floating Heart	Herbaceous	High
<i>Oplismenus hirtellus</i>	Wavyleaf Basketgrass	Grass -Sedge	High
<i>Panax ginseng</i>	Asian Ginseng	Herbaceous	
<i>Pennisetum alopecuroides</i>	Fountain Grass	Grass -Sedge	
<i>Persicaria perfoliata</i>	Mile-a-minute Weed	Vine	Very High
<i>Phalaris arundinacea</i>	Reed Canary-grass	Grass -Sedge	High
<i>Phellodendron amurense</i>	Amur Cork Tree	Tree	High
<i>Phragmites australis</i>	European Common Reed Grass	Grass -Sedge	Very High
<i>Picea abies</i>	Norway Spruce	Evergreen	
<i>Picea abies</i> 'Little Gem'	Little Gem Dwarf Norway Spruce	Evergreen	
<i>Picea abies</i> 'Nidiformis'	Bird's Nest Spruce	Evergreen	
<i>Picea abies</i> 'Pendula'	Weeping Norway Spruce	Evergreen	
<i>Picea engelmannii</i>	Engelman Spruce	Evergreen	
<i>Picea glauca</i> 'Conica'	Dwarf Alberta Spruce	Evergreen	
<i>Picea glauca</i> 'Glaucia'	White Spruce	Evergreen	
<i>Picea glauca</i> 'Pendula'	White Spruce	Evergreen	
<i>Picea mariana</i> 'Ericoides'	Blue Nest Spruce	Evergreen	
<i>Picea omorika</i>	Serbian Spruce	Evergreen	
<i>Picea omorika</i> 'Nana'	Dwarf Serbian Spruce	Evergreen	
<i>Picea pungens</i>	Colorado Spruce	Evergreen	
<i>Pieris japonica</i>	Japanese Pieris	Broadleaf evergreen	
<i>Pinus densiflora</i>	Japanese Red Pine	Evergreen	
<i>Pinus flexilis</i>	Western Limber Pine	Evergreen	
<i>Pinus mugo</i>	Mugo Pine	Evergreen	
<i>Pinus nigra</i>	Austrian Pine	Evergreen	
<i>Pinus parviflora</i>	Japanese White Pine	Evergreen	
<i>Pinus ponderosa</i>	Ponderosa Pine	Evergreen	



BOTANICAL NAME	COMMON NAME		Invasive
<i>Pinus strobiformis</i>	Southwestern Pine	Evergreen	
<i>Pinus strobus</i> 'Fastigiata'	Columnar White Pine	Evergreen	
<i>Pinus strobus</i> 'Horsford Dwarf'	Horsford Dwarf White Pine	Evergreen	
<i>Pinus strobus</i> 'Nana'	Dwarf White Pine	Evergreen	
<i>Pinus strobus</i> 'Pendula'	Weeping White Pine	Evergreen	
<i>Pinus sylvestris</i>	Scotch Pine	Evergreen	
<i>Pinus thunbergii</i>	Japanese Black Pine	Evergreen	
<i>Pinus virginiana</i>	Virginia Pine	Evergreen	
<i>Potamogeton crispus</i>	Curly Pondweed	Herbaceous	High
<i>Prunus laurocerasus</i>	English Laurel	Tree	
<i>Prunus serrulata</i>	Kwanzan Cherry	Tree	
<i>Prunus subhirtella</i>	Flowering Cherry	Tree	
<i>Prunus yedoensis</i>	Yoshino Cherry	Tree	
<i>Pseudotsuga menziesii</i>	Douglas Fir	Evergreen	
<i>Pseudotsuga menziesii</i> 'Glaucua'	Blue Douglas Fir	Evergreen	
<i>Pseudotsuga menziesii</i> 'Pendula'	Weeping Douglas Fir	Evergreen	
<i>Pueraria montana</i>	Kudzu	Vine	Very High
<i>Ranunculus ficaria</i>	Lesser Celandine	Herbaceous	Very High
<i>Rhamnus cathartica</i>	Common Buckthorn	Shrub	Very High
<i>Robinia pseudoacacia</i>	Black Locust	Tree	Very High
<i>Rosa multiflora</i>	Multiflora Rose	Shrub	Very High
<i>Rubus phoenicolasius</i>	Wineberry	Shrub	Very High
<i>Salix alba</i> 'Pendula'	Golden Weeping Willow	Tree	
<i>Salix alba</i> 'Tristis'	Golden Weeping Willow	Tree	
<i>Salix atrocinerea</i>	Rusty Willow	Shrub	Very High
<i>Salix babylonica</i>	Babylon Weeping Willow	Tree	
<i>Salix caprea</i> 'Pendula'	Weeping Pussy Willow	Tree	
<i>Salix discolor</i> 'Pendula'	Weeping Pussy Willow	Tree	
<i>Salix integra</i> 'Hakuro nishiki'	Dappled Willow	Shrub	
<i>Silphium perfoliatum</i>	Cup-plant	Herbaceous	High
<i>Spiraea japonica</i>	Japanese Spirea	Shrub	
<i>Spiraea japonica</i> 'Anthony Waterer'	Anthony Waterer Spirea	Shrub	
<i>Spiraea japonica</i> 'Goldflame'	Goldflame Japanese Spirea	Shrub	
<i>Spiraea japonica</i> 'Goldmound'	Goldmound Japanese Spirea	Shrub	
<i>Spiraea japonica</i> 'Little Princess'	Little Princess Japanese Spirea	Shrub	
<i>Spiraea japonica</i> 'Neon Flash'	Neon Flash Japanese Spirea	Shrub	
<i>Spiraea japonica</i> 'Shirobana'	Shirobana Japanese Spirea	Shrub	
<i>Spiraea nipponica</i> 'Snowmound'	Snowmound Nippon Spirea	Shrub	
<i>Taxus baccata</i>	Irish Yew	Evergreen	
<i>Taxus x</i>	Hybrid Yew	Evergreen	
<i>Taxus x media</i> 'Densiflora'	Dense Hybrid Yew	Evergreen	
<i>Taxus x media</i> 'Hicksii'	Hick's Hybrid Yew	Evergreen	

BOTANICAL NAME	COMMON NAME		Invasive
<i>Taxus x media</i> 'Wardii'	Ward Hybrid Yew	Evergreen	
<i>Thuja occidentalis</i> 'DeGroot's Spire'	DeGroot's Spire Arborvitae	Evergreen	
<i>Thuja occidentalis</i> 'Emerald Green'	Emerald Green Arborvitae	Evergreen	
<i>Thuja occidentalis</i> 'Hetz Midgit'	Hetz Midgit Eastern Arborvitae	Evergreen	
<i>Thuja occidentalis</i> 'Rheingold'	Rheingold American Arborvitae	Evergreen	
<i>Thuja occidentalis</i> 'Techny'	Mission Arborvitae	Evergreen	
<i>Thuja occidentalis</i> 'Tom Thumb'	Tom Thumb Arborvitae	Evergreen	
<i>Thuja plicata</i>	Western Red Cedar	Evergreen	
<i>Trapa natans</i>	Water Chestnut	Herbaceous	Very High
<i>Tsuga canadensis</i> 'Coles Prostrate'	Coles Prostrate Canadian Hemlock	Evergreen	
<i>Tsuga canadensis</i> 'Gentsch White'	Gentsch White Canadian Hemlock	Evergreen	
<i>Tsuga canadensis</i> 'Jeddeloh'	Jeddeloh Canadian Hemlock	Evergreen	
<i>Tsuga canadensis</i> 'Pendula'	Weeping Canadian Hemlock	Evergreen	
<i>Tsuga canadensis</i> 'Summer Snow'	Summer Snow Canadian Hemlock	Evergreen	
<i>Viburnum davidii</i>	David Viburnum	Shrub	
<i>Viburnum rhytidophyllum</i>	Leatherleaf Viburnum	Shrub	
<i>Vinca minor</i>	Common Periwinkle	Broadleaf evergreen	
<i>Vitex rotundifolia</i>	Beach vitex	Shrub	High
<i>Vitis</i> 'Canadice'	Canadice Ornamental Grape	Vine	
<i>Vitis</i> 'Interlaken Seedless'	Interlaken Ornamental Grape	Vine	
<i>Vitis</i> 'Niagara'	Niagara Ornamental Grape	Vine	
<i>Vitis</i> 'Reliance'	Reliance Ornamental Grape	Vine	
<i>Vitis x</i>	Hybrid Grape	Vine	
<i>Yucca filamentosa</i>	Yucca/Adams Needle	Broadleaf evergreen	
<i>Yucca filamentosa</i> 'Golden Sword'	Golden Sword Yucca	Broadleaf evergreen	





*Native landscape of the William Seneca Administration Building. Courtesy of Food is Our Medicine project.*

## The Native Landscape Of The William Seneca Administration Building

Seneca Nation—"The landscape surrounding the William Seneca Administration Building is currently being redesigned to accurately reflect the history of the Seneca Nation. It now will be a living narrative of our Seneca culture and most importantly a demonstration of our connection to the land.

"We have been proactive and removed all the Eurasian and introduced non-native plant species surrounding our building.

"Historically, the predominant native landscape of Western New York was originally deciduous hardwood forests made up of Oaks, Red & Sugar Maples, Elms, Tulip Trees and Dogwoods. The forest floor was comprised of a myriad of native shrubs and indigenous wildflowers and grasses that formed the backbone of Seneca life in the forest. Within this natural world we were supplied with all that was needed to sustain life by providing shelter and abundant food from plants and animals.

"By reimagining the face of our Administration Building, we have been able to take a step towards creating a landscape that speaks to the wealth of the forest and our history as Seneca people.

"Careful consideration has been given to selecting plants that are significant to our Seneca culture. These local indigenous plants would have been used to create our shelters and longhouses. We have included native species that would have supplied our people with food, medicine, fiber, dyes and plants used for our ceremonies."