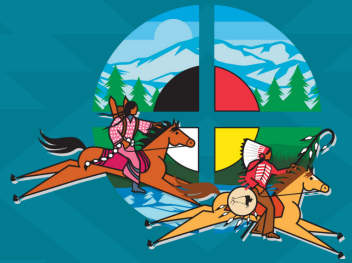




Annual Report 2022



People of the Sacred Land



People of the Sacred Land

Table of Contents

- 01 | Our Story
- 02 | Outcomes
- 04 | Board of Directors
- 06 | Truth, Restorations & Education Comission
- 08 | Research
- 09 | Community Outreach & Parnterships
- 10 | Our Supporters
- 11 | Financials
- 12 | Future Work



OUR MISSION

People of Sacred Land supports American Indian residents of Colorado, and those whose homelands are in Colorado, in preserving their culture, language, and traditional ways of life that are tied to the land.

Our Story

People of the Sacred Land (PSL) was founded in response to concerns regarding the historical inaccuracies surrounding American Indian history in Colorado. While developing the plan for PSL, two fundamental questions emerged: why are there no American Indian reservations on the front range or the Eastern Plains of Colorado, and why are there only two small Ute reservations in the state?

A group of American Indians residing in Colorado initiated the quest for answers, leading them to discover two inflammatory and illegal proclamations authorized by the territorial governor and American Indian Superintendent, John Evans. Extensive research and collaboration within the community revealed that these proclamations remained legally binding and had never been rescinded. After approximately a year and a half of dedicated efforts, the proclamations were successfully rescinded.

As concerns about the treatment of American Indians in Colorado deepened, we established our organization to officially study the past. The first task was to secure funding for creating a Truth, Restoration, and Education Commission (TREC). Initially, it was called the Truth, Reconciliation, and Education Commission. However, the name was modified based on advice from supporters, who emphasized the need for “conciliation” before achieving reconciliation.

Currently, the TREC actively engages in learning sessions alongside PSL research consultants as they diligently uncover the truth about the genocide that lead to the founding of Colorado. With evidence from our research, we will work to secure more funding and support from local and state governments, along with nonprofits and foundations, for American Indian-led organizations providing services for our community.

Why our work matters...



More than 100,000 American Indians and Native Alaskans live in Colorado



American Indians make up 2.9% of the U.S. population, but only recieve 0.4% of philanthropic dollars.



In the Denver Metro Area, American Indians are 4.5 times more likely to live unsheltered than other groups.



American Indian Women are 2.5 times more likley to be raped or sexually assulted compared to other populations.



2022 Programmatic and Operational Outcomes

- The People of the Sacred Land raised funding for the Truth Restoration and Education Commission (TREC). TREC will study the seven American Indian nations that ceded land in Colorado by treaty.
- PSL implemented an operational plan and hired six researchers and a consulting firm to help us with our work.
- Hired the consulting firm Earth Village to develop a Historical Economic Loss Assessment (HELA). We are designing the assessment to be replicated across the country.
- PSL recruited seven American Indian leaders to serve as TREC commissioners.
- We held two TREC meetings in 2022. Meetings are recorded and will be shared with the public as part of our final report.
- Worked with allies in the Colorado legislature to introduce a bill that would have helped fund our long-term goals. The bill was unsuccessful. We will continue to find more opportunities within the state governance structure to increase funding for American Indians. In fall 2022, we supported a bill that allowed American Indians to receive waivers of fees for hunting and fishing. The bill was unsuccessful.
- One of our proudest moments was working with our allies to pass the Murdered and Missing Indigenous People bill despite not having Gov. Polis' full support. We sponsored a victory celebration for our Women Warriors who won this great battle.
- We supported the ongoing effort to rename Mount Evans.



2022 Organizational and Management Outcomes

In 2022, the IRS approved the People of the Sacred Land as a charitable non-profit organization. The People of the Sacred Land accomplished the following in 2022:

- Organized a group of American Indian people interested in finding ways to help our people
- Created a board of directors; all are American Indians
- Developed by-laws for the nonprofit organization
- Developed a corporate charter for the organization
- Selected a leadership team for the organization
- Created a plan to develop the Truth Restoration and Education Commission (TREC)

Board of Directors

People of the Sacred Land is a 100% American Indian-led 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. Directors are members of the Colorado American Indian Community and are dedicated to working towards PSL's mission to create equity for American Indians in Colorado and the tribes whose lands were stolen from them.



Rick Williams, President
Oglala Lakota



Rick Waters, Treasurer
Kiowa and Cherokee



Christine Baker Sage, Director
Southern Ute



Donna Chrisjohn, Director
Sicangu and Diné/Indigenous



Patrick Goggles, Director
Northern Arapaho



Steven LaPointe, Director
Sicangu Lakota



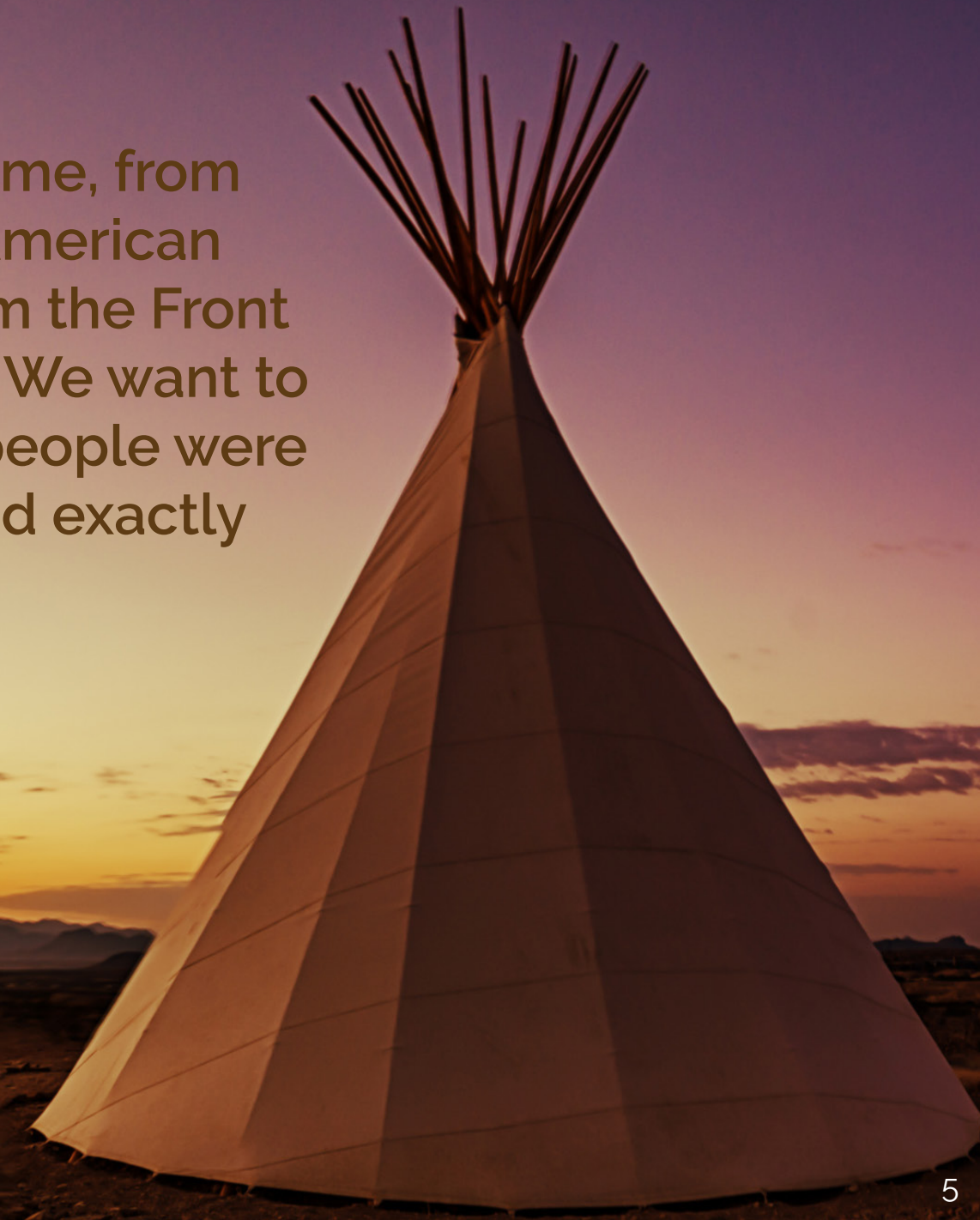
Monyka Snowbird, Director
Anishinaabe



Jennifer Wolf, Director
Ponca/Ojibwe/Santee

“In a very short period of time, from 1861 to 1864, virtually all American Indians were removed from the Front Range and Eastern Plains. We want to know exactly how Indian people were removed from this area and exactly how much was lost.”

- Rick Williams, PSL President



Truth, Restoration & Education Commission

The Truth, Restoration, and Education Commission (TREC) is working to examine the true history of Colorado and what led to the genocide of American Indians in Colorado. Currently, the TREC is working on an Economic Loss Assessment and will use this report to develop restoration recommendations and educate the Colorado community about American Indian history. Commissioners were appointed based on their extensive historical knowledge, legal expertise, and connections to their tribal nations to ensure the utmost integrity of PSL's research and recommendations.

Commissioners



Teresa Doresett
Southern Cheyenne



Christine Baker Sage
Southern Ute



Dr. Richard Littlebear
Northern Cheyenne



Dallin Maybee, JD
Northern Arapaho



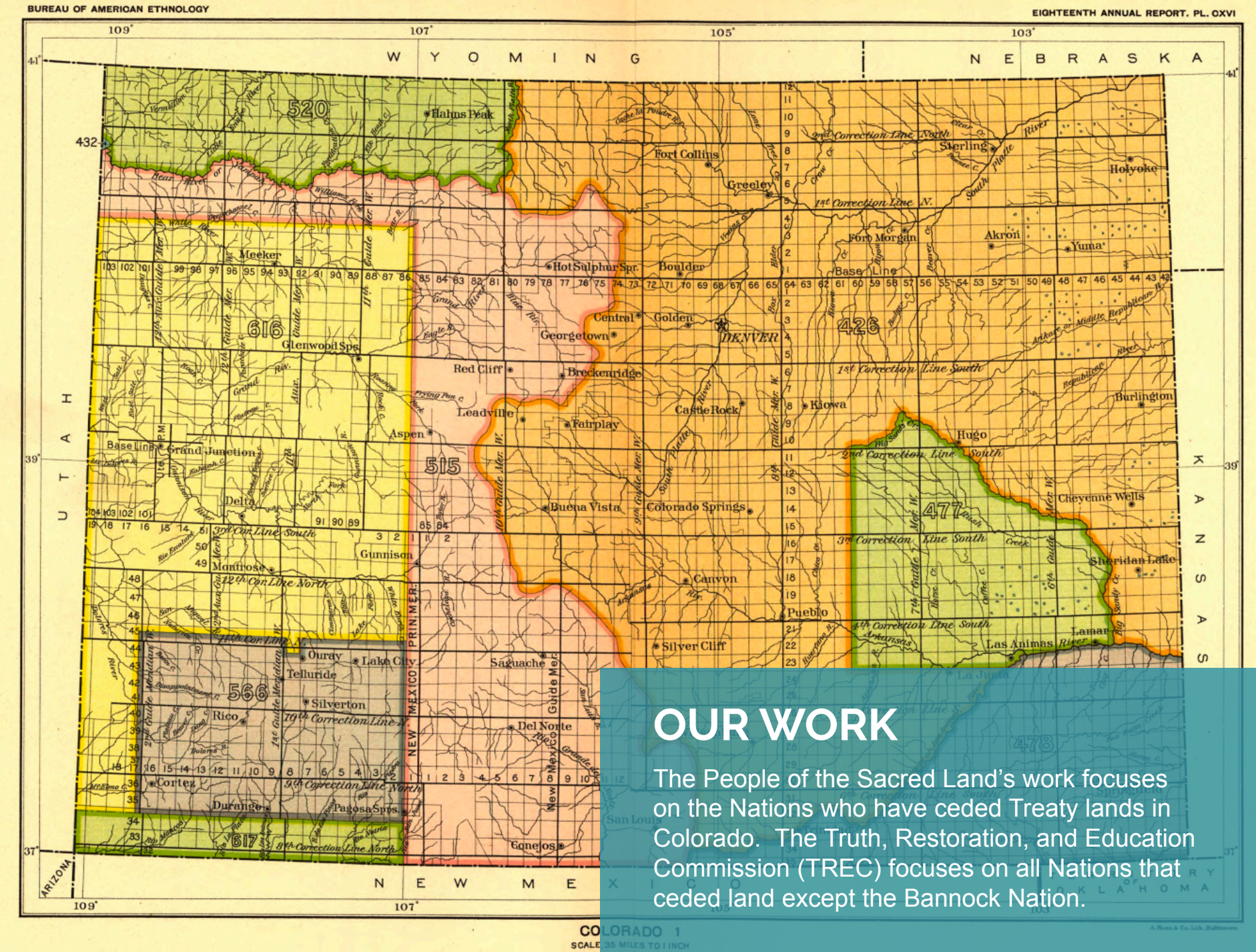
Rick Waters
Kiowa & Cherokee



Kimberly D. Varilek, JD
Eastern Shoshone



Russel D. Zephier, JD
Lakota



OUR WORK

The People of the Sacred Land's work focuses on the Nations who have ceded Treaty lands in Colorado. The Truth, Restoration, and Education Commission (TREC) focuses on all Nations that ceded land except the Bannock Nation.

I spend a lot of time feeling rage, but there is power in channeling that rage and uncovering the truth. It's not just freeing for me—once I get past the initial heartbreak—we are also freeing our ancestors and doing right by those who came before us. We are honoring their legacy and hopefully channeling that rage to create a better future for our people.

– Raven Payment, Research Consultant
Anishinaabe & Kanien'kehá:ka

Research

PSL's research focuses on the history of American Indians in Colorado after the Treaty of 1851. Researchers are currently developing historical reports and presentations to uncover the truths surrounding the displacement of American Indians from the state. The primary objective of our research is to challenge the prevailing narrative of Colorado history while shining a light on the harsh realities of colonization and the appropriation of American Indian lands.

The work researchers take on is challenging, as they are learning about how truly brutal invading settlers were to our ancestors. Uncovering these harrowing truths and making direct connections to the circumstances of Indigenous People today is vital to uplifting our community. We strive to tell the truth about what happened to our people, so that we may heal, remain connected to our traditions, and revive our traditional ways of life and values.



Community Outreach & Partnership

In 2022, People of the Sacred Land held our first webinar in an effort to educate the Colorado Community about our work and the history of American Indians in Colorado.

We partnered with Right Relationship Boulder, a nonprofit organization working to support Indigenous People who currently live in the Boulder Valley and those whose tribe call the Boulder Valley home. The webinar drew in over 100 registrations and nearly 75 attendees.

During the webinar, researchers shared powerful

testimony that described just how violent European Invaders were to American Indians. Webinar Moderator Jerilyn DeCoteau took a moment to reflect and asked an important question: "What laws, what rules of society, what belief systems would justify such callous disregard for life? Whether it's human life or buffalo? This is the question we need to answer as a society, and we can't move forward until we face that question." Our need for understanding and truth to heal is why we do our work.

Our Focus



Our most precious people in our society are our Elders. We honor our Elders annually during the American Indian Elders Christmas Dinner.



Assist American Indian individuals in navigating society by offering support in areas such as housing, food banks, shelters for survivors of domestic abuse, and aid for unsheltered relatives whenever possible.



Advocate for relationships with higher education institutions to enhance educational opportunities for all American Indians, and support American Indian students in the K-12 educational systems.



We are working to re-establish American Indian hunting and fishing rights based on treaty language.

Hohóu • Neaese • Towac • Aishen • Áho

Thank You to Our Supporters

The People of the Sacred Land would like to express our deepest gratitude to our supporters. With your generous contributions, our researchers tirelessly uncover the true history of Colorado and shed light on the devastating impact of genocide on our community. Our quest for truth is fueled by our profound love for our ancestors, culture, and community.

Thanks to your generous funding, we can contribute to various important endeavors. These include supporting efforts to rename landmarks in Colorado, organizing educational events for American Indians and non-natives, and hosting communal meals and celebrations for our cherished Elders and those dedicated to caring for our community. Together, we are reclaiming space for our American Indian community members, opening doors to participate in traditions, and providing opportunities for education and personal growth.

With your continued support, we can forge a path toward healing, empowerment, and a brighter future for our American Indian community. Thank you for standing with us on this transformative journey.

Foundations

Chinook Fund
The Christensen Fund
Colorado Health Foundation
L.P Brown Foundation
NDN Collective

Individuals Donors

Adam Auerbach
Laurie Betlach
Sarah Bradshaw
Rebecca Brown
Hadassah Damien
Stephen Jones
Myra Lam
Kimberly Morse
Paula Palmer
Cathie Phelps
Roxanne Pignanelli
Pamela M. Piombino

Financial Report

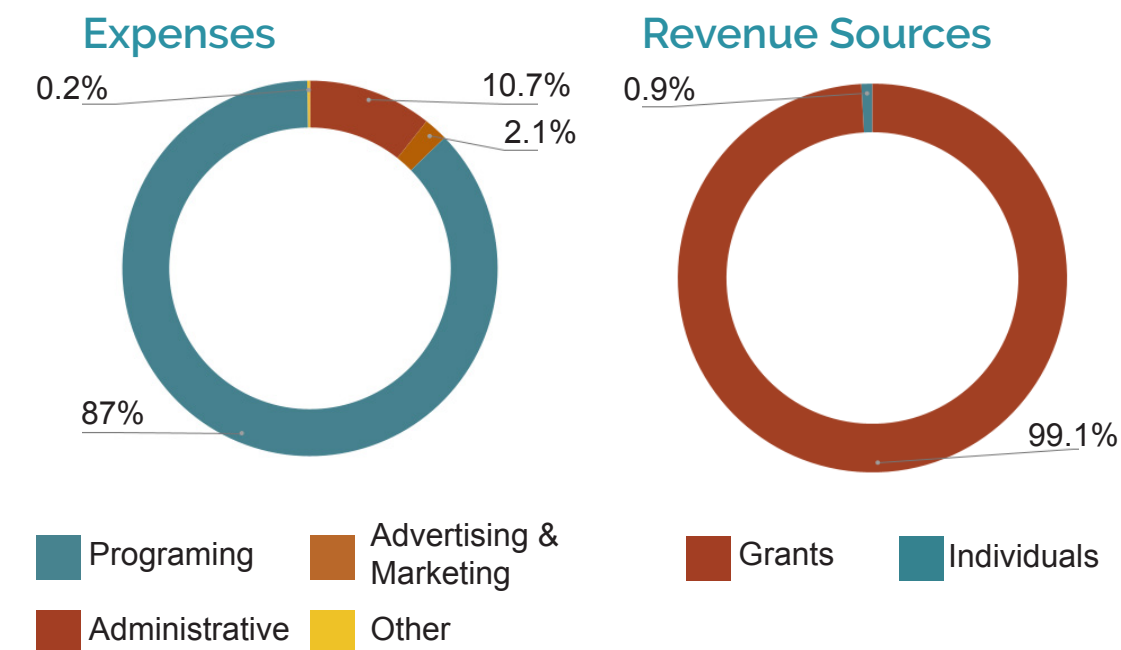
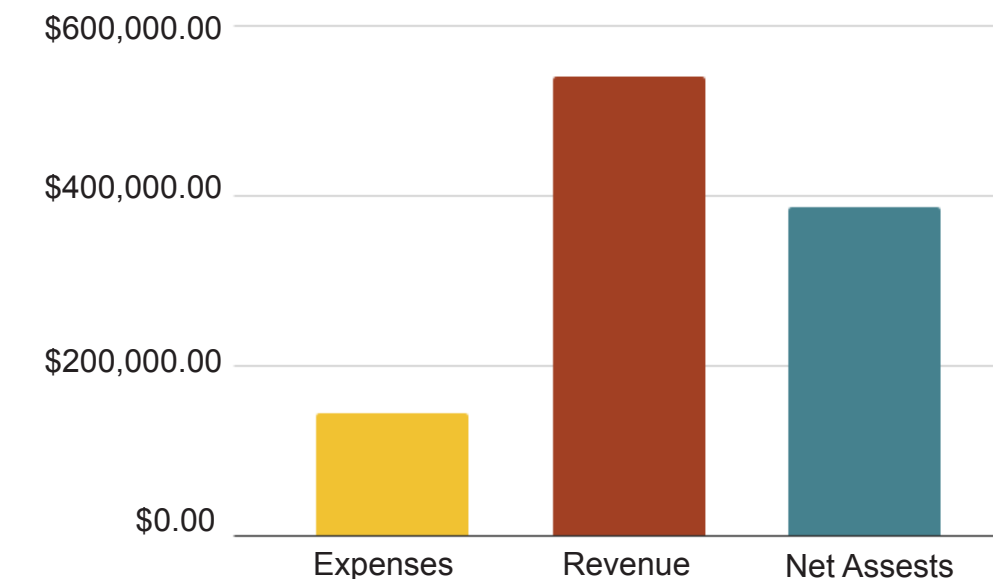
Thanks to the effort of our adaptable team, board members, and supporters, People of the Sacred Land continues to grow our financial resources to support our effort to seek justice for American Indians in Colorado. In 2022, we received major grants from The Christensen Fund, NDN Collective, and Windward Fund. We also saw an increase in individual donations as we began our efforts to educate the Colorado Community about our work through webinars and presentations.

In order to maintain responsible management of the generous philanthropic assistance you provide, we diligently oversee our budget using a cash-based approach. This entails carefully monitoring real-time expenses and revenues that are accessible for utilization within the present fiscal year.

If you would like a copy of our 990 or have any questions, please contact us:

Email: info@peopleofthesacredland.org

Fiscal Year 2022

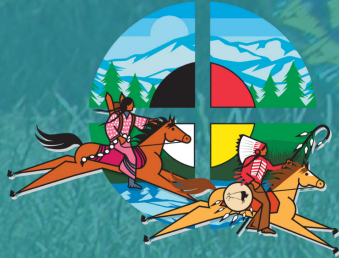


Continued Support for American Indians

We are currently working on how to transfer land back to Tribal Governments and American Indians who are displaced. More than 100,000 American Indians live in Colorado. We will develop the following concepts in conjunction with the Truth, Restoration, and Education Commission (TREC):

- We are working on developing the required accreditation to serve as a conservation easement entity in the State of Colorado so that we can transferring lands back to American Indians.
- PSL intends to create conservation easement status to secure sacred sites and protect them from looting and grave robbing. There are over 200 unprotected sacred sites in Colorado.
- The PSL supports the development of a “Tribal Embassy Office” in Denver to provide an office and a voice in decisions for the Tribes who have no reservation land in Colorado because their land was stolen.
- We will continue to work with our allies on legislation impacting American Indians in Colorado. We do not represent the People of the Sacred Land in lobbying efforts but provide advocacy and assistance when possible.





People of the Sacred Land

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peopleofthesacredland.org

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People of the Sacred Land

Contact Us
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