



A MEETING OF
SACRED WATERS
A Global Gathering of Indigenous Voices

Rio Grande Gorge
Photo courtesy of William Horton

EVENT AGENDA

MARCH 12 - 13, 2024 | Isleta Resort & Casino Hotel

Land and Water Acknowledgment

We respectfully acknowledge the meeting will be held in the Southern Tiwa Territory on the traditional homelands of the Pueblo of Isleta and their descendants. We honor the land and waters of the Rio Grande Basin and all Indigenous Nations and Peoples who maintain historic ties to the basin, and persist as stewards throughout the generations.

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Support for this gathering is provided by a grant from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation



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Tuesday, March 12, 2024 | Isleta, NM | 9am - 6:30pm

7:00am - 5:00pm 8:00am	Registration Continental Breakfast in Foyer
	Plenary - Grand Ballroom
9:00am Grand Ballroom	Opening Ceremony Land and Water Acknowledgment Welcome Address Local Tribal Leader (invited)
9:30am Grand Ballroom	Poemahau: Cosmic Stream of Heart Energy and Soulfulness River of Life Elder Kathy Wan Povi Sanchez (San Ildefonso Pueblo) Sayain Circle of Grandmothers/Wisdom Keeper Tewa Women United
10:00am Grand Ballroom	Healing Through Sanctified Kindness and Ethical Space Piikani Blackfoot Elders (Chief) Dr. Reg and Rose Crowshoe (First Nations, Canada)
10:30am	Networking
11:00 am Grand Ballroom	Plenary Roundtable Discussion Reflection: Indigenous Values What are the core values that guide you and your work?

11:30am Grand Ballroom	Decolonizing The Whanganui River (Aotearoa/New Zealand) Turama Hawira, Te Pou Tupua (Whanganui Iwi) (Human Face and Voice of the Whanganui River) Raukura (Naani) Waitai Te Puwaha Project
12:00pm (Lunch Provided) Grand Ballroom	Indigenous Women as Stewards of Our Rivers Chairwoman Amelia Flores Colorado River Indian Tribes
1:00pm	Networking - Go to Concurrent Sessions
1:15pm	Concurrent Sessions Listed on page 6 of this agenda
2:30pm Grand Ballroom	Plenary Roundtable Discussions Reflection: Values into Practice In what ways do you put your core values into practice?
3:00pm Grand Ballroom	Water Protector Panel Moderated by Judith Le Blanc (Caddo) Executive Director, Native Organizers Alliance Pua Case (Kanaka Maoli) Program Director, Mauna Kea Education and Awareness Anabela Carlón Flores (Yaqui) Activist and Lawyer, Rio Yaqui, Sonora, Mexico Julia Fay Bernal (Sandia Pueblo/Yuchi) Executive Director, Pueblo Action Alliance
4:30 pm	Wrap Up Day 1 Reflection: Working Together What is your vision for the future? What changes do we need to make to get there?
5:30pm - 6:30pm Seminar Room	Networking Reception Ailani, Singer-Songwriter (Santa Clara Pueblo) (heavy appetizers provided)



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Wednesday, March 13, 2023 | Isleta, NM | 9am - 2:30pm

7:00am - 12:00pm 8:00am	Registration Full Breakfast in Foyer
	Plenary - Grand Ballroom
9:00am Grand Ballroom	Opening Prayer
9:10am Grand Ballroom	Transforming Challenges into Growth Verna Teller (Southern Tiwa – Pueblo of Isleta) Former Governor of the Pueblo of Isleta New Mexico Recently retired Chief Judge - Isleta Tribal Court
9:30am Grand Ballroom	Emerging Leader Panel: The Next Generation Moderated by Shannon Seneca, PhD, REHS/RS, EIT Haudenosaunee Environmental Engineer Mohawk of the Grand River Turtle Clan University at Buffalo, Indigenous Studies Department Amber Souza, MSW, Kali'uokapa'akai Collective Coordinator Huliauapa'a Macy Duxfield (Ngā Rauru, Te Ātihaunui-ā-Pāpārangī, Ngāi Tahu) Environmental Policy Whanganui Aotearoa/New Zealand Reyes DeVore (Jemez Pueblo) Program Director Pueblo Action Alliance

10:40am	Networking - Go to Concurrent Sessions
11:00am	Concurrent Sessions Listed on page 7 of this agenda
12:15pm Grand Ballroom (light lunch provided)	Call For A New Water Paradigm Vernon Masayesva (Hopi) Founder and Executive Director of Black Mesa Trust
1:00pm Grand Ballroom	Plenary Roundtable Discussions Reflection: Promoting Commitment What commitment can we make today for the health and healing of our ancestral waters? Consider your commitment to yourself, your community and to each other.
1:45pm Grand Ballroom	Acknowledgments
2:00pm Grand Ballroom	Closing Ceremony Global Prayer for our Ancestral Waters
2:30pm	Travel Home

A Meeting of Sacred Waters was organized by Red Star International, Inc. with support from our local partner, Pueblo Action Alliance.



Day 1 Concurrents

Rio Grande	<p>Sacred Waters: Hopi Springs Restoration Through Pa’angni Lead Presenter: Dr. Sarah E. Abney, (Jamaican/Taino/Yuroba) Water Resources Program Manager, Hopi Tribe (US)</p> <p>An overview of the meaning of “water is life” on Hopi. The values, projects & relationships surrounding the protection of sacred waters through restoration and culturally respectful initiatives using traditional ecological knowledge. Hopi Tribal representatives will foster dialogue with the audience to build relationship with interested water stewards.</p>
Basque	<p>Radioactive Waste in Our Backyard: Water Walking for a Nuclear Free Future Lead Presenter: Shannon Seneca (Mohawk, Grand River Turtle Clan) Research Assistant Professor, University at Buffalo (US)</p> <p>The nuclear weapons complex has created long-lasting impacts, from mining to weapons testing and waste disposal. In western New York, upstream from the Seneca Nation Cattaraugus Territory, we are burdened with a radioactive waste site that sits on Cattaraugus Creek. As trained scientists and engineers work towards fully understanding the complexities, they walk with water protectors that have spent a lifetime protecting our Mother Earth’s life blood; with all our minds as one, we can uphold our responsibilities to our waterways for many generations.</p>
Manzano	<p>Navajo Ecological Knowledge Systems: Spirituality, Ceremonies, Practice, and Interacting with Nature Ecosystems Lead Presenter: Dr. Perry R. James (Navajo) Assistant Professor of Bilingual Education - Western New Mexico University (US)</p> <p>In sharing my Nihok’aa Diyin Dine’é Bila’ Ashdla’ii (Sacred Five-fingered People of the Earth Surface) as they relate to knowledge systems. I propose to shed light on how our language plays a vital role in contributing to the healing of our ancestral waters. Our land is intricately woven within and across our land, and it is our cultural responsibility to lead and educate others using our first-hand tribal knowledge systems to be stewards and managers of the land.</p>
Sunrise	<p>The Kali’uokapa’akai Collective: An Indigenous-Led Collective Impact Initiative in Hawai’i Lead Presenter: Kelley Lehuakeapuna Uyeoka (Kanaka ‘Ōiwi) Executive Director, Huliauapa’a (Hawai’i)</p> <p>Ka li’u o ka pa’akai, translated as, “the essence of salt,” was described by a revered Hawaiian elder as a metaphor of pa’akai (salt) being an agent of protection, preservation, healing, and bringing people together. Grounded in this concept and calling upon the sentiments and wisdom of our kūpuna (elders), the Kali’uokapa’akai Collective operates as a community of practice for advocates, leaders, and change agents committed to the responsible, pono (righteous) stewardship of Hawai’i’s wahi kūpuna (ancestral places).</p>
Mesa	<p>Waipuna aa Rangi Lead Presenter: Nicola MacDonald Chief Executive, Ngāti Manuhiri Settlement Trust (Aotearoa/New Zealand)</p> <p>We exist to be a voice for mana whenua across “Entity A” as defined in the Water Services Reform Programme. At the heart of the reforms is ensuring all New Zealanders have access to safe and reliable drinking water, wastewater and stormwater. As part of these reforms, the proposed new Water Services Entities must give effect to Te Tiriti o Waitangi, remove existing barriers and prioritise system design on incorporating solutions that give effect to Te Mana o te Wai and addressing Iwi/Māori rights and interests.</p>
Ballroom	<p>Water Protection and the Cultural Responsibility of Indigenous Women, Femmes and Two Spirit Lead Presenter: Claire Charlo (Confederated Salish & Kootenai) Land/Water Protector, Indigenous Environmental Network (US)</p> <p>Indigenous Women in many tribes are protectors of water. Clean water is vital to growing traditional foods and medicines. Claire Charlo attended the United Nations Conference on Climate Change in December 2023 and will provide information on the session and explore the role of Indigenous Matriarchy and our sacred connection to water and how it connects to the work being done in the United Nations.</p>

Day 2 Concurrents

Rio Grande	<p>Wolastoq: Beautiful and Bountiful River Lead Presenter: Ken Paul (Wolastoqey) Lead Fisheries Negotiator, Wolastoqey Nation (Canada)</p> <p>Wolastoq is the beautiful and bountiful river whose watershed expands and encompasses areas across the Atlantic Canada and Northeastern US border. This presentation will outline some of the historical background of the treaty relationship, and how the Wolastoqey Nation is asserting self determination and sovereignty despite efforts of ongoing colonialism to assimilate and eliminate Indigenous inherent and Treaty-protected rights.</p>
Basque	<p>Water Relations Lead Presenter: Tahila Mintz (Yaqui) Founding Director OJI:SDA’ Sustainable Indigenous Futures (US)</p> <p>Water connects us all, the reverberation of my water interacts with your water to recognize one another. This is between us and all beings with water. We will share together in circle, our water relations stories, while drinking tea and talking with and about the plants that are with the water in the tea. Tahila and Nicky are both Water Protectors, spokes people on the issues of MMIW/R and work to support the healing and thriving of our communities and respect and connection with the land and waters.</p>
Manzano	<p>Matangirua: Breathing New Life Into Our Canoe Traditions Lead Presenter: Frank Te Mihinui Kawe (Ngāti Ranginui) Founder and Principal, Rehua Innovations (Aotearoa/New Zealand)</p> <p>Canoe traditions affirm cultural identity, community connection and our relationship with taiao (the natural world). Values such as manaakitanga (caring for one another), whanaungatanga (relationship building), rangatiratanga (leadership), kaitiakitanga (guardianship), and tuku rua (reciprocity) underpin how we relate and how we care for each other, our canoes and taiao.</p>
Sunrise	<p>Rematriating Our Waters Lead Presenter: Dawn Martin Hill (Mohawk Wolf Clan) Professor Emeritus and Lead Scientist, Ohnrganos (Canada)</p> <p>Ohneganos addresses the connections of well being and water. The methodology applied demonstrates Indigenous knowledge (IK) systems through story, technology and application of IK in cocreation and production, interactive digital mapping, voice recording and film allow for a deeper appreciation for spiritual and cultural connections to water.</p>
Mesa	<p>Indigenous Water Ethics: Indigenous Water Declarations & Statements Lead Presenter: Mona Polacca (Colorado River Indian Tribe: Havasupai/Hopi/Tewa) Indigenous Water Ethics Coordinator, Indigenous Environmental Network (US)</p> <p>Emerging in the United States in the early 1980s, the environmental justice movement (EJM) has transformed discourses, ethics, and practice of environmental sustainability around the world. This session focuses on Indigenous Water Ethics, exploring the questions: What was the impact of the uses of Title VI of the 1964 Civil Rights Act in environmental justice litigation? What are the concerns expressed by Indigenous activists regarding the need for Indigenous Water Ethics and principles that recognize and support tribal sovereignty and cultural autonomy? How are Indigenous Water Ethics principles influencing change in attitudes, knowledge, and beliefs about water?</p>
Seminar	<p>Wangu Purinya Kayini: Song of Living Waters Lead Presenter: Melissa Kennedy (Tati Tati) Founder and CEO, Tati Tati Kaiejin; Research Fellow, University of Melbourne (Australia)</p> <p>The Wangu Purinya Kayini panel will begin with a short presentation to introduce the concept of cultural water and the opportunities this creates for holistic healing of people and our ancestral waters. The panel will then move into a conversation between participants from a cultural knowledge exchange program that enabled Traditional Owners from Australia, Māori from Aotearoa New Zealand, and Tribes from the USA to undertake on-Country cultural sharing and relationship building.</p>



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This gathering is a privileged space that the conveners have created to uphold the innate relationships that Indigenous peoples hold with their ancestral lands and waterways. We all rely on natural water sources for our sustenance, and therefore, we are all responsible for their care. By coming together, we aim to open doorways to learning, reflection and insights that support a sustainable future for us all.

We are grateful to the following for the support for A Meeting of Sacred Waters:



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