

# ADVANCING TRIBAL PARITY ON PUBLIC LANDS ACT

The lands and waters now known as the United States are the ancestral homelands of Indigenous Peoples. Despite physical removal and displacement from these traditional territories, tribal governments' cultural connections to these places have never been extinguished. Tribal governments and their citizens continue to exercise treaty rights to hunt, fish, and gather on public lands, and continue to access public lands to pray, conduct ceremonies, visit burial sites, and gather plants for traditional purposes.

Currently, public land management laws fail to protect the rights and interests of tribal governments with a historic connection to, or treaty or other reserved rights on, public land. For example, public land containing a tribal sacred site or where a tribal nation has a treaty right may be sold to private developers regardless of a tribe's interest in the land. Further, despite being sovereign nations, tribal governments are not afforded the same rights as state and local governments in public land management processes.



*The Bighorn Medicine Wheel is one of the largest and most well-preserved medicine wheels on public land. The Advancing Tribal Parity Act would ensure that sacred sites like these are not sold to private developers.*

Numerous federal laws require public land managers to consult with state and local governments, but omit tribal governments. Public land laws must be updated to ensure that tribal governments are afforded the respect and rights due to them as sovereign nations, and to increase protection for public lands that contain tribal cultural sites, or where a tribal nation maintains treaty or other reserved rights.

At the urging of tribal nations, the **Advancing Tribal Parity on Public Lands Act** will elevate tribal nations' role in public land management by:

## INCREASING TRIBAL CONSULTATION

The Advancing Tribal Parity on Public Lands Act will correct deficiencies in current federal law by requiring public land management agencies to provide tribal governments with meaningful public involvement opportunities in land use planning. The Act would also require that public land use plans be consistent with tribal plans where feasible.

## ENSURING TRIBAL REPRESENTATION ON ADVISORY BOARDS

Currently, federal law authorizes the establishment of advisory boards to provide input on public land management, but there is no requirement to include tribal governments on these boards. The Advancing Tribal Parity on Public Lands Act requires public land advisory boards to include at least one tribal representative.

## PREVENTING THE DISPOSAL OF CULTURAL SITES

The Advancing Tribal Parity on Public Lands Act will prohibit the sale of public land containing a tribal cultural site, where a tribal nation retains treaty or other reserved rights, or that contains a former reservation.

## ADDING CULTURAL SITES TO LAND ACQUISITION CRITERIA

The Advancing Tribal Parity on Public Lands Act corrects deficiencies in current law by adding the presence of cultural sites and the fulfillment of treaty obligations to the criteria considered by public land managers in prioritizing land acquisition.

## DID YOU KNOW?



The Laramie Treaty of 1868 gave Native Americans the right to hunt on unoccupied lands, like these in the Bighorn National Forest.

Yet tribal governments with such rights often have little to no say in the management of these lands. The Advancing Tribal Parity on Public Lands Act would address these and other inequities.