



**NATIONAL
INDIGENOUS**
WOMEN'S RESOURCE CENTER

COMMITMENTS FOR MOTHER EARTH: A Climate Sustainability Policy

Created April 2024

Why Our Commitments Are Important

The National Indigenous Women's Resource Center understands and values the role that environment, climate, and conservation play in the furtherance of our mission to provide national leadership to end violence against American Indian, Alaska Native and Native Hawaiian women by supporting culturally grounded, grassroots advocacy. We know that our efforts to preserve a clean, healthy, and sustainable planet is not only important for the seventh generation, but also for the Native women and children we exist to serve. Just as safe affordable housing, legal services, economic security and other basic resources further our vision to restore sovereignty and safety for Native women, the sustainability of our mother earth keeps us safe, healthy, viable and prosperous.

Our Impact On Mother Earth

We simultaneously recognize that while our environmental footprint is relatively small given the small size of our organization, we must also model the behaviors and practices we wish to see in the world. We believe the largest opportunities for NIWRC to become more sustainable are in our transportation, events, and office supplies.

- Transportation - We are a small staff that serves the enormity of Indian Country. This often requires our travel in order for our staff to be in the communities in which we serve and to advocate for the policies that will protect our Native women and children.
- Events - A large part of our work is offering trainings, conferences, education and other support to key leaders and audiences that have the ability and influence to carry this knowledge to their own communities.
- Office Operations - Most of our staff work remotely in a home office space, which relies heavily on consistent electrical energy usage, or a shared office space that utilizes common office materials and generates typical office waste.

Our Sustainability Vision + Goals

NIWRC envisions having a role in the movement to stop violence against women that is sustainable, replicable, and serves as a model for other organizations to reduce their environmental footprint in order to create a more sustainable future.

We commit to driving progress on the following goals in furtherance of this vision.

- Evaluate NIWRC's consumption and practices
- Reduce NIWRC's overall consumption and establish practices that reflect our values
- Openly share our progress and learnings with like-minded communities

What We Will Do

- Transportation
 - We will critically consider whether travel is necessary
 - We will maximize travel by coordinating tandem events whenever possible
 - We will consider ways to utilize public transportation, carpool, and other shared transportation methods
 - We will purchase carbon offsets for all air travel
- Events
 - We will make every effort to provide food at our events that is local and in season
 - We will make every effort to provide food that is traditional and sustainable
 - We will promote vegetarian meals at all events
 - We will balance our effort to host events in areas that are geographically advantageous for participants to minimize travel, with the acknowledgement that travel to and from Native communities does often require extensive travel
 - We will offer recycling and compost at all of our events along with education about how to use each
 - We will purchase carbon offsets for panelists, speakers, and other critical leaders traveling to attend our events
 - We will work with vendors and venues that promote sustainability and share our values for the environment
 - We will only produce swag that is environmentally friendly and user practical
 - We will work towards reducing paper products at events by offering materials digitally, with printed copies upon request, balancing limited technology access that impacts many from Native communities

- Office Operations, both shared and remote
 - We will stock our offices with eco-friendly materials whenever possible
 - We will offer recycling and compost in our offices with education for how to use each
 - We will set all printers to double-sided printing and utilize other eco-modes on office devices
 - We will utilize only safe, nontoxic, and eco friendly cleaning products in our offices
 - We will seek to utilize reusable items in our offices
 - We will utilize energy efficient light bulbs and energy efficient equipment in our offices
 - We will continue to limit unnecessary office printing through our migration to a secure cloud based document filing system
 - We will continue to migrate to on-demand printing for resources to minimize energy to only what is needed
 - We will offer ongoing training on how to work with digital files to further limit the use of paper

How We Will Do This

We recognize these commitments require effort, accountability and monitoring, and it will be a process for us to ensure full implementation. Senior leadership will be responsible for socializing these practices with all staff, implementing accountability measures to ensure these commitments are followed, and ensuring incoming staff are aware of these commitments. The organizational annual report will include a brief summary describing progress towards these goals.

For those working in shared office spaces, we will distribute the responsibility for implementing these commitments and practices across the senior leadership housed in those offices. For those working in remote offices, we will rely on individual staff member's personal commitment to upholding NIWRC's values of sustainability.

Conclusion

NIWRC has a role to play in creating safe, livable and healthy environments for our people and we believe this starts with us. This vision and these commitments are a reflection of who we are and who we want to be in this world.