

**Conversation with the Field:
*Highlighting and Supporting Indigenous Women's Sacred
Ties to their Homelands and Culture as a Protective
Factor***

**Traditional Opening
Welcome**

The Spiritual Connection of Indigenous Women to the Land

- Our identity, our sovereignty, is tied to maintaining the sacred connection with Mother Earth. For many of our people, the land and water/natural resources hold a sacred connection and are places where many ceremonies must take place. The land and waters/natural resources also provide sacred medicine plants, minerals, and wildlife for these ceremonies.
- In many Indigenous perspectives, waterways, Mother Earth, and women are all viewed as life-givers and are therefore interrelated. Indigenous peoples across various communities and cultures recognize the connection between women and land—and hold both as sacred.
- The exploitation and destruction of Mother Earth reflected in climate change marks the clear continuation of colonization, as Indigenous peoples across the world are forced out of their ancestral lands, and face cultural genocide and violence as an effect of corporate, military and government interests, including extractive industries and tourism.
- As Indigenous women, we recognize that both land and Indigenous women are sacred and connected, and that both require legislative and policy actions to protect them from extractive industries and corporate interests. Reclaiming Indigenous matrilineal beliefs and restoring sovereignty to Native Nations and Indigenous people across the world is therefore central to protecting Indigenous women and holding extractive industries and others accountable.



Six Point Action Plan

- <https://www.niwrc.org/restoration-magazine/june-2021/6-point-action-plan-reform-current-systemic-barriers-and-restore>
- Point 6: ***As Indigenous women, we recognize that both land and Indigenous women are sacred and connected, and that both require legislative and policy actions to protect them from extractive industries and corporate interests, such as the passage of the Save Oak Flat, HR 1884/S.915.***



Discussion Questions

Advocates are all too familiar with the connection between the desecration and destruction of homelands and the disproportionate and disparate rates of violence against Native women. In your view, can you share about this connection of protecting the land and protecting Native women? What does culture as a protective factor mean to you?



Discussion Questions

There are a lot of people who do not understand this sacred connection and are still learning about the sacredness of ceremonies, and protections within Indigenous cultures and traditions. What would you say to people who may not understand these connections? What do you want them to hear, understand, respect and honor?

**Native women's domestic violence and sexual assault coalitions & NIWRC
organizing and advocating to end violence against women,
including missing and murdered Indian women**

Sept. 2016, Sacred Stone Camp
Standing Rock Sioux Tribe



Discussion Questions

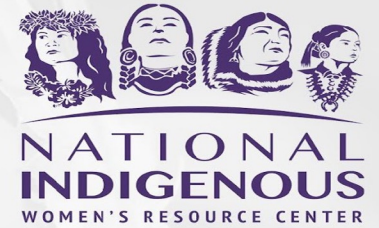
What are you doing now or plan to do after our CWTF to support Indigenous communities' struggles to protect their homelands and women? How can other people/organizations/partnerships support your efforts?



Resources

- NIWRC's *Restoration Magazine*: <https://www.niwrc.org/restoration-magazine>
 - <https://www.niwrc.org/restoration-magazine/june-2021/oak-flat-chichil-bildagoteel>
 - <https://www.niwrc.org/land-threats>
- *Safety For Native Women: VAWA and American Indian Tribes*
- *Climate Change and Indigenous Women's Rights: Brazil, Guatemala, and the United States* UN Panel Discussion: [webinar recording available: <https://indianlaw.org/swsn/climate-and-indigenous-women%E2%80%99s-rights-brazil-guatemala-and-united-states>]
- Webinar: *The Effects of Climate Change on Gender Based Violence and Indigenous Communities*: [webinar recording available: insert link here]
- Memo: *The Climate and Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Relatives Crises: Intersections, Root Causes, and Immediate Steps Towards Ending Both* <https://ndncollective.org/memo-the-climate-and-missing-and-murdered-indigenous-women-and-relatives-crises/>





Traditional Closing

Thank you!

niwrc.org

515 Lame Deer Ave., Lame Deer, MT 59043 Phone 406.477.3896 Toll-Free 855.649.7299 Email info@niwrc.org



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