



The National Association of Tribal Historic Preservation Officers

PO Box 19189 CWashington, DC 20036-9189

Phone 202.628.8476 CFax 202.628.2241 Cwww.nathpo.org

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Tribal Historic Preservation Officers (THPOs) provide a variety of services. Listed below are examples of what THPOs were able to accomplish with the limited federal funds received to date.

* All THPOs believe that their work is an active ***expression of tribal sovereignty*** as they assume the state historic preservation responsibilities for their respective tribal lands.

* THPOs work diligently to help ***Federal agencies*** comply with the National Historic Preservation Act and other federal laws to deliver needed services to tribal communities on large projects, such as new community water source, landfill planning, highway repaving, and small projects, such as individual home site development. For example, federal agencies that have partnered with the Makah Tribe in historic preservation goals include the US Coast Guard, the National Park Service, US Fish and Wildlife, Army Corps, and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

* THPOs are involved in the ***planning and compliance*** needed for road, school, housing and economic development construction. For example, the Caddo THPO has helped their tribal government develop roads programs in and around Caddo County by providing their expertise and information to avoid the destruction of an area listed as part of the historic Fort Cobb.

* THPOs provide technical assistance that is essential to ***Native language*** conservation and rejuvenation. For example, the Lac du Flambeau Band of Lake Superior Chippewa Indians operates the Ojibwe Language conservation program.

* THPOs work in tribal communities to offer ***cultural and heritage tourism***, especially to the state's citizens, including operating tribal museums, archives, and research departments. For example, the THPOs for the Makah, Catawba, Tunica-Biloxi, Navajo, and Menominee are directly involved with the operation of their tribe's museum or cultural center.

* THPOs sponsor ***educational outreach programs for thousands of grade school children*** across the country, as well as educational outreach and technical training programs for students, interested public, and natural resource professionals. For example, the Catawba THPO has sponsored an educational outreach program to more than 2,500 grade school children.

* THPOs provide an important cultural service for their tribal communities by providing ***oversight for repatriation per NAGPRA*** and related matters. For example, almost all THPOs implement the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act at their local, tribal level. The Menominee THPO is also the NAGPRA coordinator for the tribe, which has conducted five repatriations with museums and brought home 69 of their ancestors with associated funerary objects for traditional burials on their reservation.

* THPOs have worked with hundreds of local ***Tribal elders*** for history interviews on respective reservations for preservation purposes. For example, the Spokane THPO was able to purchase audio recording equipment to preserve the knowledge and experiences of their tribal elders. As for almost all tribal languages, their native language is shared verbally and is not in a written format.

* THPOs perform and complete ***comprehensive surveys*** that provide an educational element to the local communities. The Caddo THPO has identified over 25 cemetery locations on tribal allotment lands under the jurisdiction of the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA). This has never been done before and the tribe now has a database of these cemeteries both at the tribal office and the BIA.

* THPOs actively work to ***preserve and restore historic structures***, including historic Bureau of Indian Affairs schools. For example, the White Mountain Apache Tribe is preserving and restoring the Fort Apache Historic District, and the Navajo Nation is restoring their Capitol Complex that was built in the 1930s by the Civilian Conservation Corps.

* THPOs ***work with local, state, and federal law enforcement*** to stop and prosecute looters of Indian remains and sacred objects. Almost all THPOs work directly with law enforcement to stop illegal activities.

* THPOs work with a variety of federal agencies to ***create an authentic interpretation*** of our National Seashores and National Parks, as well as working together to preserve the past. For example, the Wampanoag Tribe has been instrumental in the Cape Cod National Seashore's continuing success in preserving the past.

* THPOs locate and document hundreds of ***tribal cemeteries***. For example, the Catawba THPO program surveyed and restored the Old Cemetery that dates back to the 1800's and is working with a local business to repair damages to an historically documented grave site that has been looted.

* THPOs ***train hundreds of tribal members***, as well as state and federal officials, on a variety of history and living culture issues. Most THPO programs have trained hundreds of Native and non-Native staff members.

* THPOs are the ***repositories*** for archaeological records, historic building records, and cultural resource reports. For example, the Yurok Tribe with the California Office of Historic Preservation, operates the North Coastal Information Center, which is a repository of the region's archaeological site records.

* THPOs ***work closely with military installations*** in their respective areas in preserving sacred areas on lands now occupied by the Department of the Defense. Many THPOs are involved in local military installations for such programs as UXO removal and other remediation efforts.

* THPOs also ***work closely with state and local agencies***. For example, the Yurok Tribe works with the California Department of Forestry to review approximately 50 Timber Harvest Plans per year.