

**Tribal Engagement Strategy White Paper**  
**North Pacific Landscape Conservation Cooperative (NPLCC)**  
**Working Draft 4**

A note on language: There are many names by which to refer to Tribes and First Nations, including Tribal Nations, Tribal communities, Native Nations, Tribes, Indigenous peoples, Indigenous communities, Native peoples, and many more. To improve consistency, Tribes and First Nations will hereafter be referred to by the acronym, “T/FN.”

**Introduction: The NPLCC within a Changing Region**

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The NPLCC is one of 22 Landscape Conservation Cooperatives (LLCs) created by Secretarial Order No. 3289 to advance the integration of conservation science and landscape management across the North American continent and Pacific and Caribbean Islands. By taking a landscape-scale and collaborative approach to conservation, LLCs offer new ways to think about and respond to environmental stressors. The NPLCC facilitates conservation across boundaries and landscapes with many T/FN, national, and state partners, to ensure that natural and cultural resources successfully respond to a rapidly changing environment. Partly due to these tenets, the NPLCC is able to operate within two countries (the U.S. and Canada), 4 states (California, Oregon, Washington, Alaska), 1 province (British Columbia), and 1 territory (Yukon), throughout the entirety of the 2200 mile Pacific Coastal Temperate Rainforest, and include over 100 T/FN in its scope (Figure 1).

We take pride in being a self-directed partnership between federal agencies, states, T/FN, non-governmental organizations, universities, and publics. At its core, the NPLCC strives to convene partners, fund projects, build capacity, and communicate information among the various actors in the region. We take seriously a commitment to support and partner with the numerous T/FN who inhabit the Northwest (Figure 2). Intergenerational knowledge, economic and subsistence livelihoods, and

traditional practices, which are often founded upon invaluable relationships with the natural environment, are only a few examples that cause T/FN communities to be particularly vulnerable to changes in climate. T/FN are stewards of their eco-cultural resources; thus, they must engage in the work surrounding climate change to ensure that their needs and values are included and harmful solutions are not proposed.

When an expansive network of T/FN convened for the 2014 T/FN NPLCC Committee Meeting, a wealth of knowledge regarding regional environmental change was shared. In Northern California, dangerous wildfires spread rapidly through dense forests, killing flora, endangering wildlife, and evacuating Tribal communities. In Western Oregon changing tidal patterns are disrupting the availabilities of shellfish and regalia materials, while Tribes from Washington expressed concern over a lack of inter-Tribal and Tribal-U.S. unity and communication. New diseases afflicting fisheries and forests and new species of marine life, including poisonous plankton, are spreading throughout Southern Alaska. Indigenous communities in Bristol Bay, Alaska have simultaneously noted temperature changes of up to 100 degrees in two days, causing, amongst other things, alterations to the patterns of migratory birds. Oceans are rising in temperature and acidity and hazardous weather conditions are increasing in frequency and severity. Such problems are exacerbated by the region's increasing urbanization- a process closely associated with habitat fragmentation, invasive species, and water scarcity. Resoundingly, T/FN throughout the Northwest echoed an inability to continue subsisting from salmon harvests as populations continue to decline.

These occurrences are not just environmental observations, they are lived realities for T/FN communities. They not only influence the ability to continue the traditional practices and life ways on which T/FN have been built for millennia, but they also impact the daily realities for T/FN living in the 21<sup>st</sup> century United States and Canada. However, climate change can also importantly present a vector for strengthening recognition of established T/FN sovereignty. The observations made by T/FN are

giving rise to new solutions and management plans. T/FN are emerging as leaders at the forefront of climate change research, adaptation, mitigation, and planning. Since LLCs are cross-departmental and cross-jurisdictional partnerships, they can help to connect T/FN with a multitude of climate change information, funding, and activities.

In this document we present an overview of how the NPLCC attempts to engage with and show respect for our Indigenous partners according to the subsections: Structure; Communications; Funding Opportunities; Capacity Building; Data Protection and Sharing; Relationship Building. Through these topics, we hope to demonstrate the value and importance of partnering with T/FN, while detailing to other organizations the multifaceted considerations that go into such a process.

## **Structure**

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The NPLCC has designated a specific T/FN Committee for Indigenous leaders to assemble around and give guidance to NPLCC policies and operations. The T/FN Committee is directed entirely by Indigenous peoples and has the autonomy to meet separately from other committees but may be assisted by or make requests from the Steering Committee or NPLCC staff. The T/FN Committee influences and contributes to the overall Steering Committee that governs NPLCC activities. All T/FN in the region are welcome to participate in the T/FN Committee in the hopes of providing multi-voiced guidance to the 5 T/FN affiliates from British Columbia, Alaska, Washington, Oregon, and California who reside on the Steering Committee (Figure 3). The decision to have 5 T/FN on the Steering Committee was made by the T/FN Committee and the NPLCC is open to updating this decision as needed. We emphasize that the T/FN Committee retains the standing of a full committee rather than a sub-committee, and we therefore acknowledge the rights, responsibilities, and perspectives of the T/FN Committee as an entity with equal status.

To address the needs and concerns of T/FN in conjunction with the climate change research funded by the NPLCC, we also host a Science/Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK) Sub-Committee. This sub-committee is responsible for developing 5-year strategies that articulate science needs, review and recommend projects for financial support, and provide scientific quality assurance. We delineate science from TEK to acknowledge the multiple knowledge systems that exist when participating in cross-cultural research, and accordingly, we highlight the need to partner with Indigenous knowledge holders to offer leadership on how to best support TEK/Tribal priorities.

The central place of our T/FN partners within NPLCC structure is similarly specified within our foundational guiding documents. The NPLCC Charter has formative goals and guiding principles that express explicit concern for the need to engage with and show respect for T/FN in the Northwest. The specific and unique concerns of T/FN are upheld in each of these structural foundations, assuring that in every aspect of NPLCC activity, from research and implementation to data sharing and public outreach, T/FN are acknowledged, involved, and consulted.

## **Communications**

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Effective communication between T/FN and the NPLCC is essential to retaining and developing partnerships. We always endeavor to include T/FN news in our outreach publications. The monthly *Climate Science Digest* includes a T/FN Resources section that informs readers of new funding opportunities, press releases, and training programs. The quarterly *North Pacific Tidings* newsletter includes a T/FN segment that announces upcoming webinars, presentations, conferences, job listings, and project updates that may be of interest to T/FN communities. These publications are distributed to over 7500 people currently registered on our listserv and are archived on the NPLCC website. Finally, the NPLCC is an important contributor to the annual *Northwest Climate Magazine*, offering an outlet to

disseminate our T/FN research to a broader audience. Using colloquial language, interviews, and infographics, in this magazine we seek to spotlight successfully implemented Tribal-NPLCC projects, and particularly those that accentuate stewardship of cultural resources.

T/FN communications is incorporated into our Communications and Outreach Sub-Committee, again through the inclusion of permanent T/FN seats. Our Communications and Outreach Sub-Committee accommodates members from many of our various partnerships in order to certify that NPLCC tools, opportunities, and initiatives are communicated effectively and efficiently throughout the region. The sub-committee works with invaluable input from T/FN leaders to maximize accessibility of data and promote coordination among partners.

Beyond our structure and official publications, we invite T/FN to host and participate in webinars, the interactive Conservation Planning Atlas, and LLC networking events. Utilizing our expansive web of partners, we connect individual Nations and leaders with people and resources from the Northwest Indian Fisheries Committee, Intertribal Timber Council, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Institute for Tribal Environmental Professionals, Pacific Northwest Climate Change Network, Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission, and many more. We use many communication methods to reach an expansive audience, including social networking and print media, while also being attentive to preexisting networks of Tribal and First Nation communication. We recognize that T/FN often have well established communication networks, as, for example, through the Pacific Northwest Climate Change Project and the Canadian Ministry of Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation, and so we aim to be responsive to these instead of always attempting to build new communication networks.

The NPLCC understands that communication is a two-way relationship. It is important to not only include T/FN in our outreach publications, but also have T/FN communicate with us their experiences, needs, and perspectives. T/FN are welcome to share news and announcements for further

circulation. We consult with T/FN affiliates on the language and content used in important guiding documents, such as the Science-TEK Strategy and the Guidelines for Considering Traditional Knowledges in Climate Change Initiatives. It is critical to include Tribal perspectives in these documents in order to safeguard against unsuitable language and research protocols. Ultimately, since climate change and the study of TEK will impact T/FN and their constituents, it is paramount that their voices be included in the documents that guide this research.

## **Funding Opportunities**

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Whereas many funding institutions rely on government or university affiliated scientists to lead projects, the NPLCC affirms that T/FN leaders are often able implement projects themselves as they are extremely knowledgeable about the needs of their communities and the local environments they inhabit. The NPLCC stipulates that T/FN projects must be led by a T/FN or they must at least have substantive involvement in the planning and implementation of the project. This is mandated to protect against unequal institutional relationships or unfair directions of information flow that may arise when T/FN are involved with federal, state, or university research projects but are not given a leading role. Such joint partnerships aid the leveraging of limited resources and help to address overlapping shared priorities. Nevertheless, the NPLCC is relatively unique in its dissemination of funds directly to T/FN whenever possible. The NPLCC frequently funds research into cultural resources and subsistence species as opposed to commercial or federal interests. It is important to consider the impacts climate change poses to Tribal resources as these species or relationships may be overlooked in other projects. In these funding opportunities, the NPLCC accepts that sensitive data is to remain under the purview of T/FN control and special allowances are made to protect against the sharing of sensitive data, as is discussed below.

Of the more than 55 projects that have been funded by the NPLCC to date, in which over \$2.3 million has been invested and \$3.2 million leveraged, almost one third (~\$700,000) has been funded directly to T/FN partners for at least 15 Tribal projects between 2011 and 2016.

## **Capacity Building**

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The NPLCC helps to arrange and fund training programs and travel opportunities in order to strengthen the ability of T/FN to implement their own projects and advance their efforts for adaptation planning. Travel to conferences, financial assistance for workshops, or funding to host meetings can allow T/FN to expand their technical background and provide occasions to circulate knowledge with other Tribal and non-Tribal entities. Travel assistance can be essential for those who live in remote areas or have limited budgets. We help to facilitate such meetings while being courteous of time and place. It is necessary that these meetings consider the timings of other regional T/FN events and are held in places that are centrally accessible by a broad coalition of T/FN.

The NPLCC can serve as an important point of contact if a T/FN is applying for other forms of funding. Our staff have helped to coordinate applications, review proposals, and write letters of support. If a T/FN needs assistance with a proposal or project, we can draw upon our ever expanding partnerships to build new connections around shared priorities. The NPLCC hopes to provide T/FN with opportunities to strengthen skills and widen resources through these avenues of capacity building.

## **Data Protection and Sharing**

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Special considerations must be made when working with T/FN in regards to the sharing of data. Particularly when developing projects that concern TEK, it must be remembered that traditional

knowledge is often considered to be private and is held and owned by T/FN. Knowledge retained within T/FN is not open and free as it is within Western frameworks.

The NPLCC respects the rights of T/FN knowledge sharing throughout the proposal, funding, implementation, and reporting processes. We make transparent in the initial proposal solicitations that we neither want nor require T/FN to share culturally sensitive information with us. We honor the sovereignty of each individual T/FN to exercise autonomy and jurisdiction over what information they consider to be culturally sensitive. The only information to be shared with us is that which the T/FN itself deems as non-sensitive. Oftentimes this process is reflected in legal agreements that are approved by T/FN before funding is distributed and the project implemented. The NPLCC endeavors to certify that the intellectual property held within a T/FN is protected at all levels of NPLCC engagement.

Concurrently, one of the primary goals of the NPLCC is to make data available and accessible, so we also share a plethora of data with T/FN. The data and final reports that are shared with us are made publicly available through the NPLCC website. Final reports can produce insightful results while also properly protecting sensitive data. The posting of successful proposals and final reports brings NPLCC projects to a larger audience, provides a platform for T/FN to showcase their important work, and upholds a commitment to cross-departmental and cross-jurisdictional sharing of information.

## **Relationship Building**

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The NPLCC believes that if strong T/FN partnerships are to be sustained, a relationship of trust and equality must be fostered. We firstly recognize that neither we nor any government agency holds the ultimate authority to dictate how T/FN engagements should be managed. These relationships are based on a process of negotiation and they vary with each Nation and project. We appreciate the ability for T/FN to lead their own projects and the methodologies, data, and outputs that are generated from

them. Many Indigenous peoples reiterate that T/FN are not just community groups or stakeholders, but are sovereign Nations and should be regarded as co-managers engaging in a government-to-government relationship.

Secondly, we seek to generate equality between knowledge and management systems. The knowledge held by Indigenous peoples has too often been disregarded since it sometimes differs from Western science protocols. This is a dynamic that must be recognized and actively improved if equal and resilient partnerships are to emerge in the face of climate change.

The NPLCC truly affirms that engaging with T/FN is undeniably required if LCCs are to succeed in substantially addressing environmental stressors related to climate change across landscapes, boundaries, and communities. In this engagement, it cannot be forgotten that the knowledge held within Indigenous communities has developed over countless generations and is deeply culturally and environmentally situated; furthermore, federally recognized Tribes retain the legal status of sovereign nations and so these partnerships acquire a unique position within the operations of the NPLCC.

Figure 1: Map of NPLCC Geographic Area



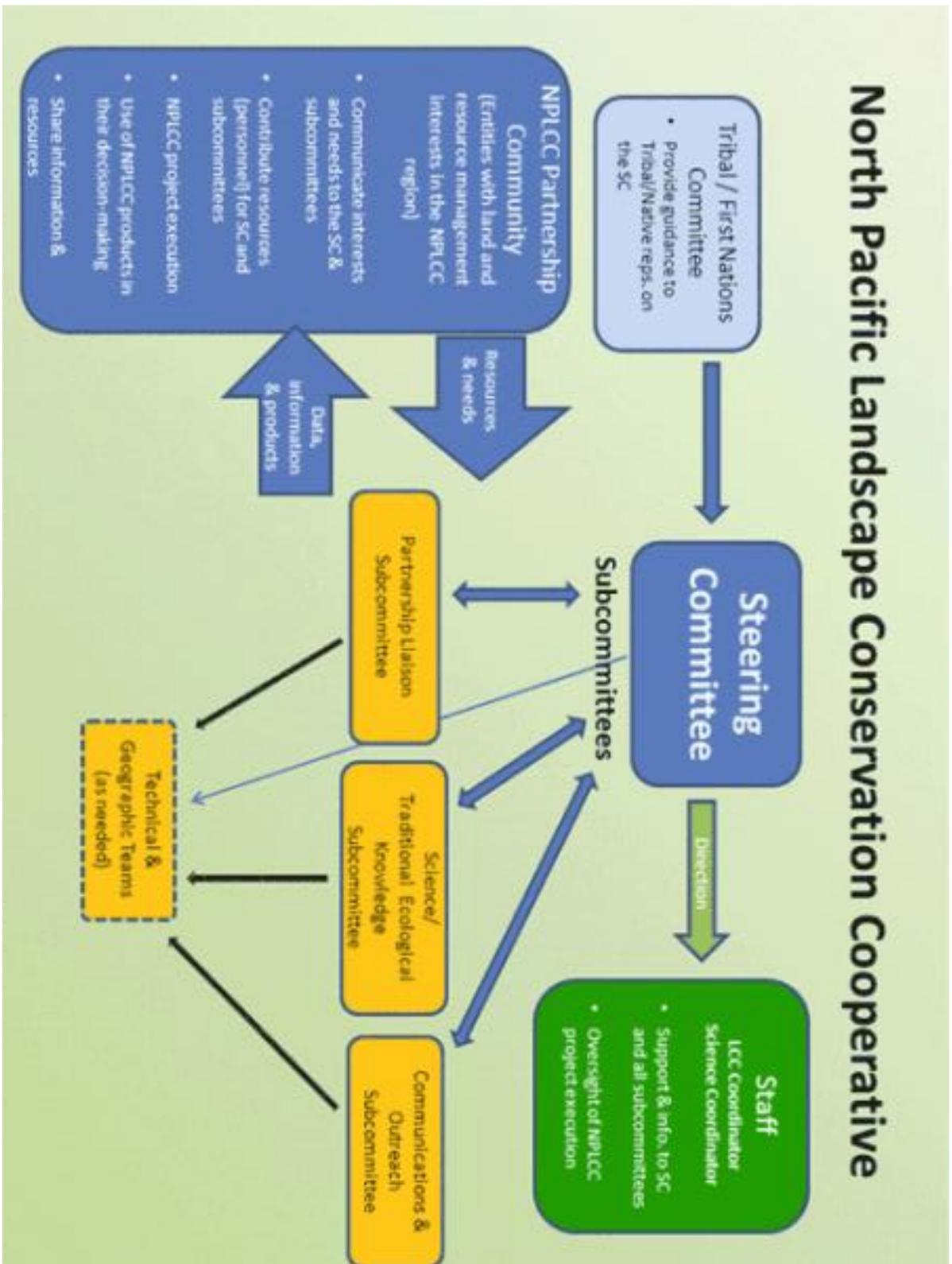
**Figure 2: Federally Recognized U.S. Tribal Nations and B.C. First Nation Language Groups in NPLCC Geographic Area**

<b>FEDERALLY RECOGNIZED U.S. TRIBES AND B.C. FIRST NATION LANGUAGE GROUPS IN NPLCC</b>	
<b>TRIBE</b>	<b>STATE</b>
Kashia Band of Pomo Tribe	California
Manchester Band of Pomo Tribe	California
Robinson, Pomo Tribe	California
Redwood Valley, Pomo Tribe	California
Sherwood Valley, Pomo Tribe	California
Cahto People, Laytonville	California
Round Valley Tribes	California
Pit River Tribe	California
Pit River Tribe, Montgomery Creek	California
Pit River Tribe, Big Bend	California
Wiyot Tribe	California
Hoopa Valley Tribe	California
Big Lagoon Rancheria	California
Yurok Tribe	California
Quartz Valley Indian Reservation	California
Resighini Rancheria	California
Karuk Tribe	California
Elk Valley Rancheria	California
Klamath Tribes of Oregon	Oregon
Cow Creek Band of Umpqua Tribe of Indians	Oregon
Coquille Indian Tribe	Oregon
Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs Indian Reservation	Oregon
Confederated Tribes of the Siletz Reservation	Oregon
Grand Ronde Community of Oregon	Oregon
Confederated Tribes and Bands of the Yakama Nation	Washington
Confederated Tribes of the Chehalis Reservation	Washington
Shoalwater Bay Indian Tribe	Washington
Nisqually Indian Tribe	Washington
Muckleshoot Indian Tribe	Washington
Puyallup Tribe	Washington
Squaxin Island Tribe	Washington
Skokomish Indian Tribe	Washington
Suquamish Indian Tribe of the Port Madison Reservation	Washington
Quinault Indian Tribe	Washington
Port Gamble S'Klallam Tribe	Washington
Tulalip Tribes of Washington	Washington

Jamestown S'Klallam Tribe	Washington
Hoh Indian Tribe	Washington
Stillaguamish Tribe of Indians of Washington	Washington
Quileute Tribe	Washington
Lower Elwha Tribal Community	Washington
Swinomish Indian Tribal Community	Washington
Upper Skagit Indian Tribe of Washington	Washington
Samish Indian Nation	Washington
Makah Indian Tribe	Washington
Lummi Tribe	Washington
Nooksack Indian Tribe	Washington
Quwutsun	British Columbia
Sto:lo	British Columbia
Sne-Nay-Muxw	British Columbia
Nlaka'pamux	British Columbia
Qualicum	British Columbia
Squamish	British Columbia
Shishalh	British Columbia
Nuu-chah-nulth	British Columbia
Comox	British Columbia
Sliammon	British Columbia
Stl'atl'imx	British Columbia
Klahoose	British Columbia
Homalco	British Columbia
Kwakwaka'wakw	British Columbia
Tsilqot'in	British Columbia
Oweekeno	British Columbia
Heiltsuk	British Columbia
Nuxalk	British Columbia
Haisla	British Columbia
Tsimshian	British Columbia
Wet'suwet'en	British Columbia
Xxaadas Haida	British Columbia
Nat'ooten	British Columbia
Gitxsan	British Columbia
Annette Island	British Columbia
Nisga'a	British Columbia
Kasaan	British Columbia
Craig	British Columbia
Kake	British Columbia
Tahltan	British Columbia

Angoon	British Columbia
Douglass	British Columbia
Hoonah	British Columbia
Chilkat	British Columbia
Tagish	British Columbia
Yukatat	British Columbia
Tutchone	British Columbia
T'Sou-ke	British Columbia
Esquimalt	British Columbia
Songhees	British Columbia
Saanich	British Columbia
Tsawwassen	British Columbia
Musqeam	British Columbia
Coquitlam	British Columbia
Tsleil-Waututh	British Columbia
Native Village of Eyak	Alaska
Native Village of Chenega	Alaska
Native Village of Chitina	Alaska
Native Village of Tatitlek	Alaska
Kenaitze Indian Tribe	Alaska
Chickaloon Native Village	Alaska
Eklutna Native Village	Alaska
Knick Tribe	Alaska
NOTES: This is not meant to be an exhaustive list of all First Nation lands in British Columbia, which numbers in the 100s. The source for this information is the University of British Columbia, with the following information: "The intent is to provide a more accurate representation of First Nations in British Columbia. [Names listed] are language areas and not an authoritative depiction of tribal territories. The names listed are the ones First Peoples prefer to call themselves. Terms and spellings do not reflect all dialects or names used by First Nations..."	
Federal recognition of U.S. Tribes was determined according to: <a href="http://www.ncsl.org/research/state-tribal-institute/list-of-federal-and-state-recognized-tribes.aspx#federal">http://www.ncsl.org/research/state-tribal-institute/list-of-federal-and-state-recognized-tribes.aspx#federal</a>	

Figure 3: Chart of NPLCC Organizational Structure



## NPLCC Goals and Objectives for Tribes/First Nations Engagement

- 1) Maximize the ability for Tribes and First Nations to participate in NPLCC activities
  - Host annual Tribal/First Nations Committee Meeting
  - Prioritize recommendations made by T/FN affiliates on Steering Committee
  - Request feedback from T/FN affiliates on content and language of official documents
  - Provide support for Tribes and First Nations to attend and participate in NPLCC meetings and events
  - Ensure that any Tribe or First Nation who expresses interest in NPLCC participation is able to do so
  
- 2) Strive to maintain open and transparent communication
  - Designate T/FN seats on Communications/Outreach Sub-Committee
  - Operate under the principles of Free, Prior, and Informed Consent
  - Follow recommendations established in the “Guidelines for Considering Traditional Knowledges in Climate Change Initiatives”
  - Ensure that the NPLCC participates in pre-established communication networks utilized by Tribes and First Nations
  
- 3) Promote awareness of the environmental knowledge held within Tribal/First Nation communities and the landscape changes Tribal/First Nation communities are experiencing while fostering equality among knowledge systems
  - Gain input from T/FN affiliates on Science/Traditional Ecological Knowledge Committee
  - Fund projects that focus on cultural and subsistence resources and projects that concern traditional knowledges
  - Include stories, articles, updates etc. from T/FN partners in communication and outreach publications
  
- 4) Promote the ability of Tribes and First Nations to implement their own projects and help to develop institutional capacity
  - Fund Tribal and First Nation partners directly whenever possible and require that Tribes and First Nations have a leading role in projects that concern them
  - Fund and host presentations, webinars, meetings, conferences, training programs etc. specifically for Tribal/First Nation audiences
  - Promote climate adaptation planning efforts throughout the NPLCC region
  
- 5) Uphold respect for established Tribal sovereignty
  - Recognize that Tribes and First Nations have authority over what is considered to be sensitive data and do not ask Tribes or First Nations to share sensitive data
  - Acknowledge that Tribal engagements are a government-to-government relationship
  - Be responsive to requests for formal or informal consultations