



Indigenous Peyote Conservation Initiative

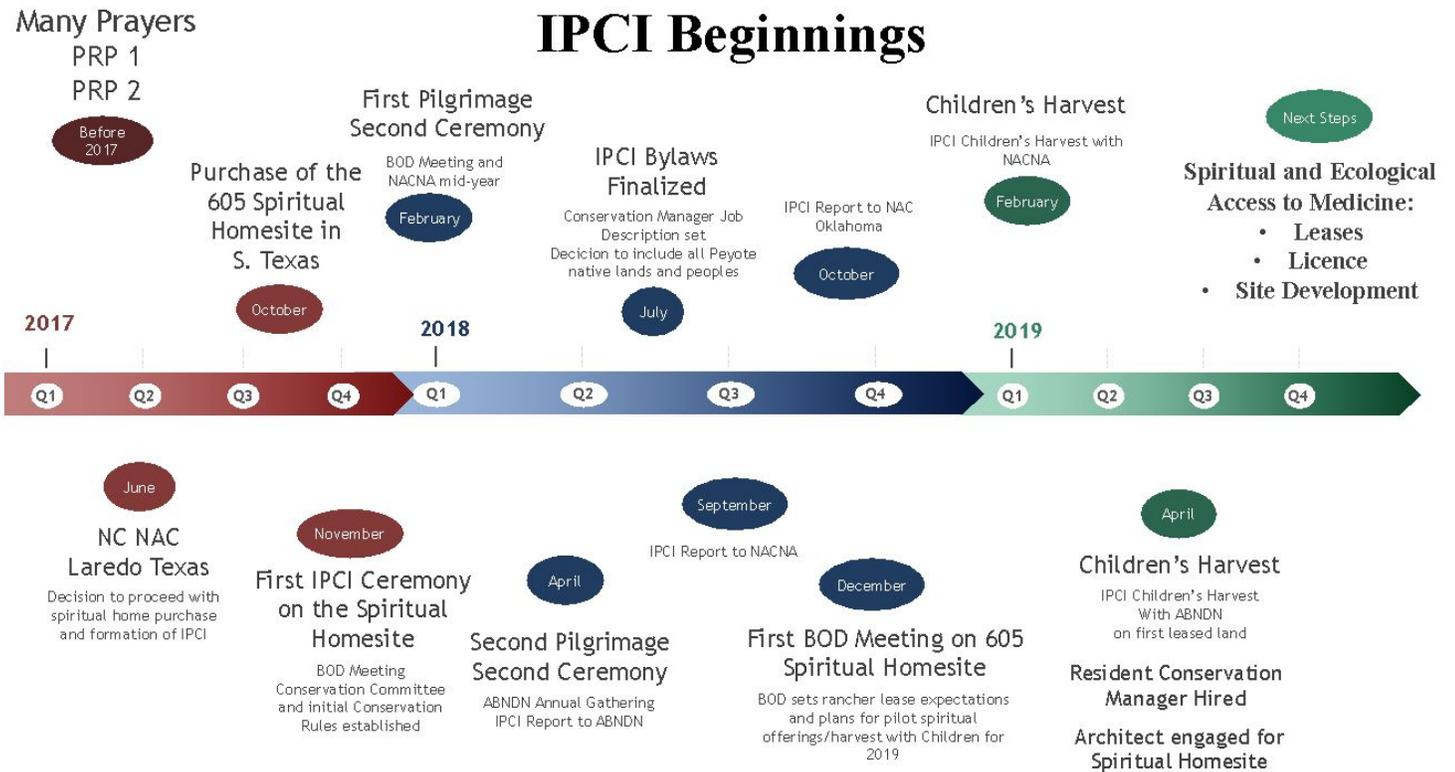
www.IPCI.life

Mission

To empower indigenous communities to conserve and regenerate their sacred Peyote medicine for spiritual use for generations to come.

2017 – 2019 IPCI DEVELOPMENT

Note: this is a simple milestones timeline created by IPCI BOD in person.



Recent and Current Activities

Land Access

A model lease for use with the Ranchers interested in working with IPCI was established by the IPCI Board during their December 2018 Meeting. Over the next year, Dr. Martin Terry will work with the Conservation Manager and graduate students to conduct conservation peyote density assessments on 6-8 Ranches that will be available for IPCI Harvests. The assessments will be used to help determine where and when harvests will be conducted. The Ranchers who are partnering with IPCI are those that have a deep respect for the Native American Church and are honored to be supporting the direct connection to spiritually and ecologically harvested medicine.

Conservation Managers

With great excitement the IPCI Board of Directors and Conservation Committee has hired our first Conservation Manager, Mr. Arnold Slowman, of Arizona. Mr. Slowman will be beginning work and living at the spiritual homesite this June. He will be the care-taker and host at the spiritual homesite in S. Texas, he will maintain good relationships with the ranchers and begin to develop our peyote

distribution policies and procedures. In October 2019, Mr. Slowman will be joined by an Assistant Conservation Manager, Jonathan Brooks, of the US Navy, who will assist with the care-taking, hosting and medicine conservation responsibilities.

Children's Harvest and Offerings

The IPCI Board, in thinking about the long-term goal of IPCI truly being for our grandchildren, decided that our initial harvests would be done by the children. In February and April of this year NAC children learned how to conduct spiritually and ecologically appropriate harvest and were able to go into the gardens where the medicine grows and escorted by their parents and grandparents harvest small amounts of medicine and make offerings. In February NACNA children did the first harvest, this was on the 605, as we did not yet have access to a leased ranch. In April, 120 ABNDN members, after a beautiful lesson for the children under their meeting tent, caravanned through 8 locked gates to make offerings and allow the children to harvest medicine on the land of one of our ranching partners. This next year, to 18-months harvests will continue to be limited in quantity, but done by the children with prayer and education.

Site Development

IPCI has begun the work of developing the 605-acre spiritual homesite in the gardens as a pilgrimage, learning center and home for reconnection to the Medicine. Our architect, Pedro Pizarro, – has begun drawings and is working with the Conservation Committee to set up a building schedule. It is the hope that many NAC members will be able to participate in the building, which will incorporate building with the local earth and rock to create a homesite and meeting place for all, this will include a welcome center, youth dormitory, elder-housing, bath-house, tipi sites and homes for the conservation managers. The Master Plan was developed using the vision of the IPCI Board as they imagined “What is here in one hundred years, when all of us are gone?” What will it be like here for our grandchildren as they support the conservation of the medicine for their grandchildren?”

Text from IPCI.life blog:

One year ago our IPCI leaders envisioned homes and meeting places constructed right from our home soils. We found natural builders to help us and began with an Adobe Workshop on October 7th 2019. Each Adobe block, handmade with the clay from the land and dried in the Texas sun, will provide the bricks for our first building--the Conservation Manager's house and office. In dry climates, adobe structures are extremely durable, and account for some of the oldest existing buildings. The CM home and office will nestle up next to our nursery. The vision is to have beautiful, natural buildings we can create together which will host pilgrimages and peyote gatherings for people of all ages for generations to come.

Communications

We are working on the development of a website for IPCI which will support information sharing and connection between supporters and partners. Our address will be IPCI.life. Currently we have an overview document there which is designed to be used for fundraising as we work to raise money to support the conservation and homesite efforts.



Project Leadership

Azee' Bee Nahagha of Dine Nation, NAC Navajo Nation

Steven Benally, *President*, is an enrolled Dine from Sweetwater, Arizona. Mr. Benally helps organize the Annual Spiritual Pilgrimage for his Dine people and the Native American Church of North America to the Peyote Gardens in Texas as part of his work to preserve the medicine and maintain legal access for indigenous peoples.

Native American Church of South Dakota

Sandor Iron Rope, *President*, an enrolled member of the Oglala Lakota Oyate from Pine Ridge South Dakota. Mr. Iron Rope received his B.A. in Human Services and American Indian Studies from the Black Hills State University. He supports Tribes in the U.S., Canada and Mexico, serving as President of the Native American Church of South Dakota and former chair of Native American church of North America. He is also the executive director of 'TTO', a small non-profit committed to peyote conservation and the preservation of Lakota Culture and Health.

Native American Church of North America

Andrew Tso, *President*, from Aneth Utah has worked for decades to support the Native American Church legally and spiritually as the way to protect the indigenous way of life. Mr Tso, aside from his service for the NACNA has worked to protect native land and water from oil company activities in the Aneth area.

Native American Church of Oklahoma

Eugene Black Bear Jr., *National Council NAC Representative*, Mr. Black Bear is a ceremonial leader for his people who has a direct connection to harvesting the Peyote sacrament from the Gardens in Texas as a child and is committed to the religious and land sovereignty required for the health of indigenous communities.

Cactus Conservation Institute

Dr. Martin Terry, PhD, *Associate Professor Biology at Sul Ross State University*. Dr. Terry is the Nation's leading cactologist and expert on *Lophophora williamsii* (Peyote). A founding member of the Institute, Dr. Terry brings expertise on habitat, cultivation and propagation of the Peyote Medicine and has worked as a cactus conservationist since the 1980s. He has a primary focus on protecting habitat for the vulnerable Peyote and star cactus through land preservation.

Native American Rights Fund

Steve Moore, *Senior attorney* at NARF, Mr. Moore has been supporting Native American Church of North America since 1983, providing legal protections for access to their peyote sacrament as well as water rights, sacred land rights, and repatriation of human remains. Mr. Moore's legal experience and relationship to the NAC is crucial to the peyote conservation efforts.

Riverstyx Foundation

T. Cody Swift, MA., *Director* for 10 years. Mr. Swift is a trained clinical psychologist who has collaborated with over 70 projects addressing healthy society through working with stigmatized populations and issues. He is committed to the conservation of sacred and psychedelic medicines used for recovery from trauma and for spiritual connection. He has worked as a researcher, therapist, and philanthropist toward increasing our knowledge, access, and awareness of these precious tools.

Miriam Volat, MS., *Bio-Cultural, Indigenous and Psycho-Spiritual Programs*. Ms. Volat trained at University of California and is a researcher, educator, organizer, facilitator and ecological designer who works in California, Nationally and Internationally, now with Riverstyx Foundation, to increase health in policy and community design.

Consulting Attorney on Native American Law

James Botsford, a national expert on the Native American Church, Mr. Botsford is one of the primary authors of the American Indian Religious Freedom Act Amendments of 1994, has worked nationally and in Wisconsin on the re-emergence of Indigenous Justice, Child Welfare Laws and as a champion of numerous Indian rights issues since his law career began in 1984. Though retired, Mr. Botsford has committed his expertise to this important endeavor.

Nireika, Mexico

Armando Loizaga, *President*, lives in Chalmita, Mexico where he and his wife Anya Loizaga conduct multidisciplinary clinical research protocols in Mexico to evaluate therapeutic potential of psychedelic plants used in ritual contexts. He works closely with the indigenous leaders who steward the 8000-year-old traditions surrounding indigenous peyote use in Mexico to conserve and legalize the medicine.

Javier Ignacio Martinez Sanchez M.S., *Peyote Conservation Manager*, has worked in Wirixuta for over 20 years on conservation of the sacred peyote territory. Javier has worked with communities to support their cultural identity, navigate sustainable tourism and facilitate safe pilgrimage for the Wixaritari (Huichol) indigenous groups. Mr. Sanchez' research has explored the relationships between various stakeholders of the sacred peyote, including indigenous groups, government and ranchers.