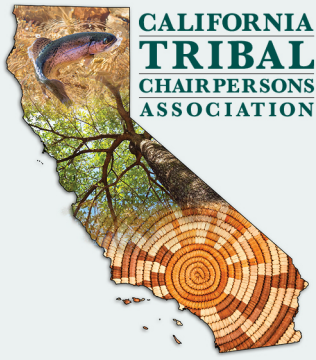




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PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
September 22, 2026

California Native American Day Celebrates "Inherent Sovereignty: Tribal Nations Fighting to Protect Our Land and Defend Our People"

59th Annual Celebration to Be Held September 25 on the West Steps of the State Capitol

SACRAMENTO, Calif. — The California Tribal Chairpersons' Association (CTCA) will host the 59th annual California Native American Day celebration on Friday, September 25, 2026, from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. on the West Steps of the California State Capitol.

California Native American Day is a statewide observance honoring California Native peoples, whose homelands long predate the state. The day celebrates living cultures, affirms Tribal sovereignty, and educates the broader public about California Native history, resilience, and leadership.

This year's theme, "Inherent Sovereignty: Tribal Nations Fighting to Protect Our Land and Defend Our People," recognizes the enduring responsibilities of Tribal Nations to their lands, cultures, and communities. The event is sponsored by Tribal Nations from across California, with legislative sponsorship from the Native American Legislative Caucus, chaired by Assemblymember James C. Ramos (D-San Bernardino).

"California Native American Day is more than a commemoration. It is a recognition of the inherent sovereignty Tribal Nations have exercised since time immemorial," said CTCA Chairwoman Erica M. Pinto (Chairwoman, Jamul Indian Village of California). "Tribal Nations continue to draw upon the strength of our ancestors as we fight to protect our lands, defend our people, and preserve a strong future for generations to come."



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Assemblymember James C. Ramos (Serrano/Cahuilla), Chair of the Native American Legislative Caucus, emphasized the importance of both celebration and education: "It is important to continue celebrating the contributions of Tribes in California. Those contributions are little known. That's why California Native American Day is not only about celebrating our diverse culture but also an opportunity to share our history and traditions. Part of that history includes our struggles to protect our sovereignty as Tribal Nations and the resiliency and strength of our state's First Peoples."

The day's program will include:

- Tribal Flag Display recognizing California's sovereign Tribal Nations
- Honoring Ceremony for Tribal Elders and Veterans
- Cultural Heritage Pavilion featuring traditional and contemporary Native knowledge
- Cultural Sharing and Speakers uplifting Native voices and perspectives throughout the day
- More Than 100 Informational Exhibitors, including Tribal organizations, state agencies, universities, colleges, and community partners
- More Than 45 Native Artisan Vendors offering handmade art, jewelry, housewares, and other original works
- Four Food Trucks serving a variety of cuisines

CTCA Vice Chairman Jesus G. Tarango Jr. (Chairman, Wilton Rancheria) offered a welcome ahead of the event: "On behalf of Wilton Rancheria, it is my honor to welcome everyone to California Native American Day at our State Capitol. Today, we honor our Elders and Veterans, affirm the inherent sovereignty of Tribal Nations, and celebrate the living cultures that continue to thrive across California. Together, we uplift the enduring strength, leadership, and lasting contributions of California's Tribal Nations."

For press inquiries, please email:

CNADInformation@gmail.com.

Media representatives attending the event should check in at the Information/Media Booth on 10th Street. For the event agenda, participant lists, and additional information, please visit www.CaliforniaNativeAmericanDay.com.

59th Annual California Native American Day – Media Guidelines

For all media outlets and representatives in attendance.

California Native American Day is a celebration of the cultures, traditions, and contributions of Native peoples across the state.

The theme of this year's event is, "Inherent Sovereignty: Tribal Nations Fighting to Protect Our Land and Defend Our People."

The presenting sponsor of the event is the California Tribal Chairpersons' Association. The legislative sponsor is the Native American Legislative Caucus, Asm. James C. Ramos (Chair).

We welcome media coverage that helps share these stories respectfully and accurately. To ensure a positive experience for all attendees, please follow these guidelines:

1. Respect Cultural Protocols

Ask permission before taking photos or videos of individuals in regalia or traditional clothing. Many regalia items hold deep cultural and personal significance.

Some cultural performers may request that certain songs, dances, or moments not be recorded or photographed. Please respect all such requests without question. These instructions will be communicated before or during the performance.

Do not enter performance or ceremonial areas unless specifically invited by event staff or Tribal Leaders.

2. Interview Requests

All interviews with Tribal Leaders or event organizers must be arranged in advance.

Please contact the designated media representative for scheduling and coordination.
Samantha Cypret: 916.803.1194 (call/text)

Please make sure to use the appropriate title and Tribe when interviewing any Tribal Leader.

3. General Courtesy

Avoid interrupting performances or ceremonies to capture footage.

Do not block attendees' views of speakers or performances. Please be especially mindful not to block the seating area reserved for Elders.

Use respectful and culturally accurate language in all coverage. If you are unsure, please ask for direction/clarification.

4. Share Your Coverage

We encourage you to share any photos or videos taken during the event with the organizers. Please email them to CNADInformation@gmail.com.

If you have any questions or need any additional information, please contact the Information Booth for assistance. Thank you for helping ensure California Native American Day is celebrated and respectfully represented.

Inherent Sovereignty: Tribal Nations Fighting to Protect Our Land and Defend Our People

59th Annual California NATIVE AMERICAN DAY

Inherent Sovereignty: Tribal Nations Fighting to Protect Our Land and Defend Our People



FRIDAY
SEPTEMBER 25, 2026
10AM - 2PM

PRESENTED BY:
CALIFORNIA TRIBAL
CHAIRPERSONS' ASSOCIATION
ARTIST: CARL AVERY, YUOK

WWW.CALIFORNIANATIVEAMERICANDAY.COM

CALIFORNIA STATE CAPITOL
WEST STEPS

LEGISLATIVE SPONSOR:
CALIFORNIA NATIVE AMERICAN
LEGISLATIVE CAUCUS
ASM. JAMES C. RAMOS, CHAIR

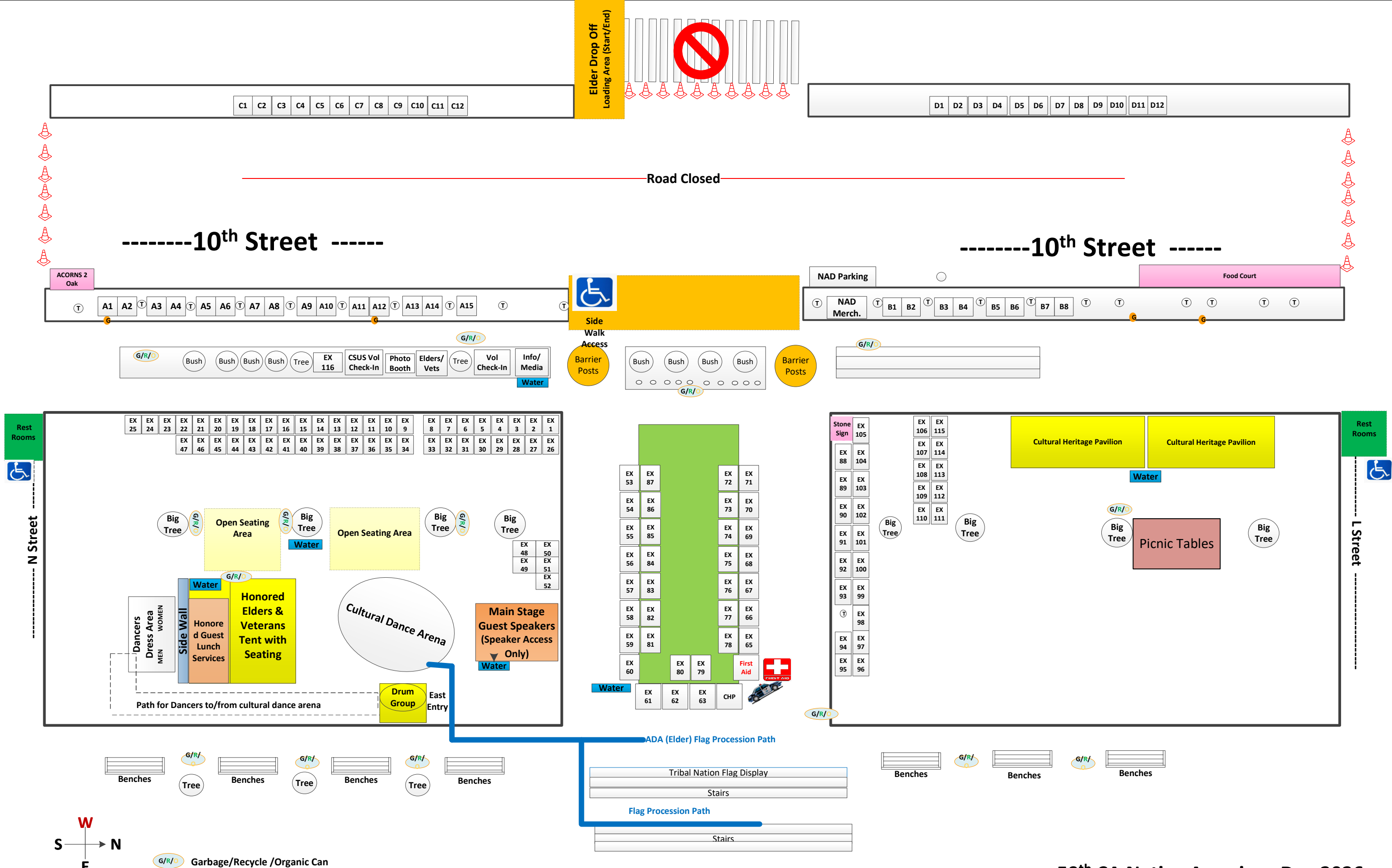
THIS EVENT IS FREE AND OPEN TO THE PUBLIC!

AGENDA

Inherent Sovereignty: Tribal Nations Fighting to Protect our Land and Defend our People

Please note: Agenda times and order are subject to change without notice. We appreciate your understanding.

- | | |
|---|---|
| ◆ 10:00 AM
CALIFORNIA TRIBAL CHAIRPERSONS' ASSOCIATION (CTCA) WELCOME
Hon. Erica M. Pinto
CTCA Chairwoman, Jamul Indian Village of California | ◆ 12:00 PM
HONORED GUEST LUNCH SERVICE
Elders, Veterans, Speakers, & Volunteers:
Please take your meal ticket to the Elders' Tent |
| ◆ 10:10 AM
OPENING PRAYER
Southern California Region
Northern California Region
Central California Region | ◆ 12:10 PM
CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF FISH & WILDLIFE
Megan Hertel, Director, Secretary, CDFW |
| ◆ 10:15 AM
GRAND ENTRY AND POSTING OF COLORS
Tule River Color Guard and Native American Veterans Post 1987
Mankiller Drum Group | ◆ 12:15 PM
CULTURAL SHARING
Karuk Tribal Singers and Dancers |
| ◆ 10:20 AM
CALIFORNIA TRIBAL NATIONS FLAG CEREMONY and PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE
Hon. Russell "Buster" Attebery, Chairman, Karuk Tribe | ◆ 12:30 PM
HONORING ELDERS & VETERANS
Dr. Annette Reed, Wiley Native American College, CSU Sacramento
Tolowa Dee-ni' Nation
Lindsey Sin, Secretary, CA Department of Veterans Affairs |
| ◆ 11:00 AM
LEGISLATIVE/KEYNOTE ADDRESS
Asm. James C. Ramos, District 45
Yuhaaviatam of San Manuel Nation | ◆ 12:40 PM
COLOR GUARD RECOGNITION & HONORARIUM |
| ◆ 11:10 AM
CULTURAL SHARING
Chumash Kiyiniwiš Singers | ◆ 12:45 PM
PRESENTATION OF ELDERS' GIFTS & VETERANS' PINS |
| ◆ 11:30 AM
GOVERNOR'S PROCLAMATION
Christina Snider-Ashtari, Secretary, Governor's Office of Tribal Affairs
Dry Creek Rancheria Band of Pomo Indians | ◆ 1:30 PM
CULTURAL SHARING
Hokan Birdsingers |
| ◆ 11:40 AM
CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
Office of the Attorney General | ◆ 1:45 PM
CLOSING PRAYER, RETIREMENT OF THE COLORS AND COMMUNITY ROUND DANCE |
| ◆ 11:50 AM
CULTURAL SHARING
Central Valley Tribal Dancers | |



Note: Water and Restrooms in the Capitol Building. Portable Restrooms with hand washing stations will be placed at L and N Street corners.

Thank you to the Tribal Nations and community partners throughout California whose generous support makes the 59th Annual California Native American Day possible!

Tribal Nation Sponsors



CAHUILLA BAND OF INDIANS
ELK VALLEY RANCHERIA
FEDERATED INDIANS OF GRATON RANCHERIA
HABEMATOLEL POMO OF UPPER LAKE
IONE BAND OF MIWOK INDIANS
JAMUL INDIAN VILLAGE OF CALIFORNIA
KARUK TRIBE
MANZANITA BAND OF THE KUMEYAAY NATION
MORONGO BAND OF MISSION INDIANS
PALA BAND OF MISSION INDIANS
PICAYUNE RANCHERIA OF THE CHUKCHANSI INDIANS
REDWOOD VALLEY LITTLE RIVER BAND OF POMO INDIANS
REDDING RANCHERIA
RINCON BAND OF LUISENO INDIANS
SAN PASQUAL BAND OF MISSION INDIANS
SHINGLE SPRINGS BAND OF MIWOK INDIANS
SOBOBA BAND OF LUISENO INDIANS
SYCUAN BAND OF THE KUMEYAAY NATION
TEJON INDIAN TRIBE
TOLOWA DEE-NI' NATION
TRINIDAD RANCHERIA
WILTON RANCHERIA
Yocha Dehe Wintun Nation

Community Partners

ACORNS TO OAKS
AMERICAN UNITED FEDERAL CREDIT UNION
AT&T
CHUKCHANSI ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
CSU OFFICE OF TRIBAL RELATIONS
PROCOPIO
SOUTHERN INDIAN HEALTH COUNCIL

Presented by: California Tribal Chairpersons' Association
Legislative Sponsor: California Native American Legislative Caucus, Asm. James C. Ramos (Chair)

California Native American Day — A Brief History

California Native American Day is a statewide observance that honors the First Peoples of the land now known as California. The holiday celebrates living cultures, affirms and upholds Tribal sovereignty, and educates the broader public about California Native history, resilience, and contemporary leadership. More than a commemoration, it is a living commitment to visibility, healing, and partnership. It uplifts language, arts, and cultural revitalization led by Tribal communities; broadens public understanding of Indigenous history and contemporary priorities; strengthens government-to-government relationships and consultation; and underscores stewardship of natural and cultural resources. Above all, it honors the creativity, innovation, and leadership of Native peoples in every sector of California life, honoring ancestors while investing in the future.

The Early Days (1939–1967): In 1939, Governor Culbert Olson proclaimed October 1 as “California Indian Day,” encouraging public recognition of Native Californians. Community celebrations expanded, including a notable 1949 event at Sacramento’s McClatchy Park organized by the Federated Indians of California and the Sacramento Tribal Community. Records recall organizers and community leaders such as Marie Potts, Bertha Stewart, Arthur Treppa, Pansy Marine, John Porter, Elizabeth Patty, Mabel Strong, Lydia Williams, Raymond Paddy, and others. The gathering featured a community picnic, a softball game, and traditional dances from Lake County and Ione.

A Capitol Tradition (1968–1997): In 1968, California Tribal leaders, in partnership with Governor Ronald Reagan, established the observance on the fourth Friday of September, launching a Capitol grounds celebration near N and 13th Streets. That year, an Indian grinding rock and bronze plaque were installed, and a ceremonial acorn tree was planted, with attendees using abalone shells during the planting, while traditional dance groups from Sacramento, Amador, Lake, and Plumas counties led the celebration. Successive governors continued the observance annually.

A State Holiday (1998–present): In 1998, the California State Assembly enacted AB 1953, signed into law by Governor Pete Wilson on September 21, establishing California Native American Day as an official state holiday. The tradition now flourishes across Tribal lands and cities statewide. The State Capitol celebration has grown into one of the largest annual events on the grounds, drawing an estimated 3,000–4,000 attendees each year. The 59th annual celebration carries the theme “Inherent Sovereignty: Tribal Nations Fighting to Protect Our Land and Defend Our People” and will welcome over 100 informational exhibitors, more than 45 retail vendors, nearly 20 cultural practitioners and Tribal Cultural departments, and 4 food trucks.

About the Organizers

Event Host: California Tribal Chairpersons Association (CTCA). CTCA unites Tribal leaders statewide to advance sovereignty and community well-being, serving as a central forum on priorities such as cultural and natural resource protection, health, education, and economic development.

Legislative Sponsor: California Native American Legislative Caucus. Formed in 2021 and chaired by Assemblymember James C. Ramos, the Caucus elevates Native priorities in the Legislature by advancing policy, education, and partnerships that strengthen State–Tribal relationships.

Planning Committee: Led by the California State Tribal Liaisons. State Tribal Liaisons are designated representatives within agencies and departments who facilitate government-to-government consultation with California Tribes. For this event, they coordinate logistics and program planning alongside dedicated community volunteers.