



## Support Indigenous Water & Land Rights and Tribal Sovereignty

*“Colonization severed people’s relationships with their families, with their land, with their food, with their songs, with their stories... The conversations about reparations and land repatriation — what that means first and foremost—is thinking about healing the relationships that have been severed.”*

**- Angela Mooney D’Arcy, Founder & Executive Director**

### WaterBack, LandBack

From urban, rural, desert and coastal tribal ancestral lands and waters, California tribal nations' water rights and sovereignty are essential for cultural and environmental preservation. Indigenous stewardship and repatriation of tribal homelands and waters amidst the challenges of access to it or limited resources, along with the negative impacts of the climate crisis resulting from colonial commercial industries is not only logical, but essential and ultimately beneficial for all.

### About Sacred Places Institute for Indigenous Peoples

Sacred Places Institute for Indigenous Peoples (SPI) is a grassroots, Indigenous-led community organization based in unceded Tongva homelands in what is also known as Los Angeles, California. Our mission is to build the capacity of Native Nations and Indigenous Peoples to protect sacred lands, waters, and cultures. Our goal is to achieve a paradigm shift that supports environmentally and socially just systems, and assure the continuation of Indigenous cultures and peoples.

SPI began in 2012 to provide in-person and virtual spaces for Native Nations and Indigenous People to think and strategically plan about how best to protect their sacred places as well as advance the environmental justice priorities of tribal communities. As a response to the lack of Indigenous representation in larger environmental justice organizations, universities, and government bodies, we apply Indigenous knowledge and worldviews to our environmental justice policy and advocacy work while re-establishing relationships with ancestral lands and waters. Through all our work, we support the collective determination of tribal nations and their experiencing of a resurgence of relationships with their homelands as rooted in Indigenous principles.

Our programs include; Sacred Ecologies program, Indigenous Waters program, Indigenous Youth Leadership Program, Ocean Protectors program, Indigenous Just Transitions and Climate Justice, Indigenous Media program and Indigenous Land Repatriation program. Support our efforts to change the paradigm shift to support environmentally and just systems and assure the continuation of Indigenous cultures and peoples. Please visit: [www.sacredplacesinstitute.org](http://www.sacredplacesinstitute.org). For more information please contact: [admin@sacredplacesinstitute.org](mailto:admin@sacredplacesinstitute.org)

## Indigenous Waters Program

We work with Native Nations, universities, environmental organizations, institutions and agencies to protect waters significant to Native Nations and Indigenous Peoples to ensure tribal voices are involved in all watershed planning. Our Indigenous Waters Program:

- Develops tribal capacity and fosters long-term water resource planning to benefit tribal communities;
- Builds the capacity of current and future tribal leaders to advocate effectively on behalf of their people for the protection of water;
- Advocates for Recognition of Indigenous Waterways as Living Entities that should be afforded Legal Rights

### Indigenous Waters Work



(Left) SPI team in Yurok territories navigating the Klamath river during the documentation of Our Water Ways, a SPI feature documentary on California tribes and water. (Right) SPI Waters Program Director standing up for Paayme Paxaayt (West River), also known as the Los Angeles River on Tongva Nation territories.

## About the WECR Caucus

Sacred Places Institute for Indigenous Peoples (SPI) is a core member of the Water Equity & Climate Resilience (WECR) Caucus. Anchored by PolicyLink, the WECR Caucus is a national network of nearly 70 organizations centering frontline communities of color and low-income communities in working to achieve water equity and climate justice through federal and state policy advocacy, centering the voices and solutions of communities most affected by water challenges and the climate crisis. For more information, contact: **Yasmin Zaerpoor**, Director of Water Equity & Climate Resilience, PolicyLink, [yasmin@policylink.org](mailto:yasmin@policylink.org).