



# **Interconnections Between Animal Law and Indigenous Law Part 1**

Jessica Chapman, JD, LLM  
Criminal Justice Program, ALDF

31<sup>ST</sup> ANNUAL ANIMAL LAW CONFERENCE

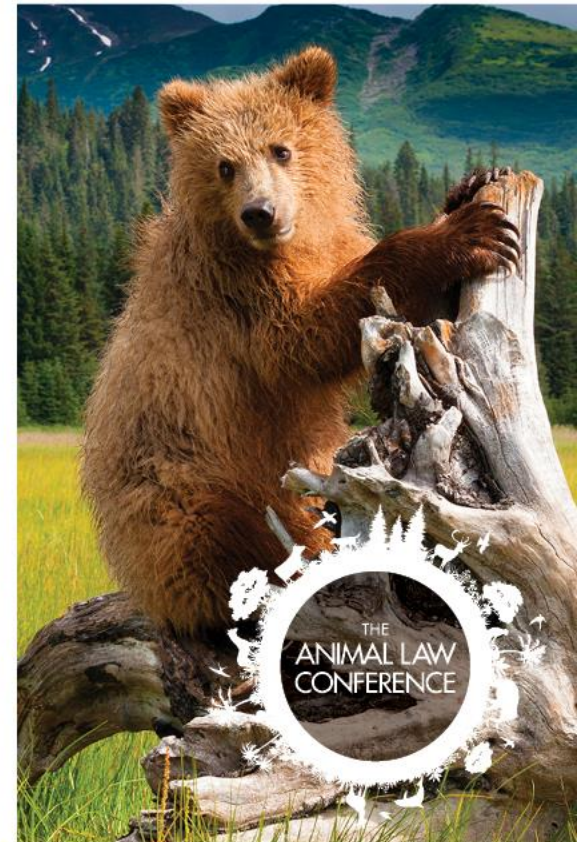


# Seeding Sovereignty (Founder: Janet MacGillivray)

**“Seeding Sovereignty is a multi-lens collective that works to radicalize and disrupt colonized spaces through land, body, and food sovereignty work, community building, and cultural preservation. By investing in Indigenous folks and communities of the global majority, we cross the threshold of liberation together.”**

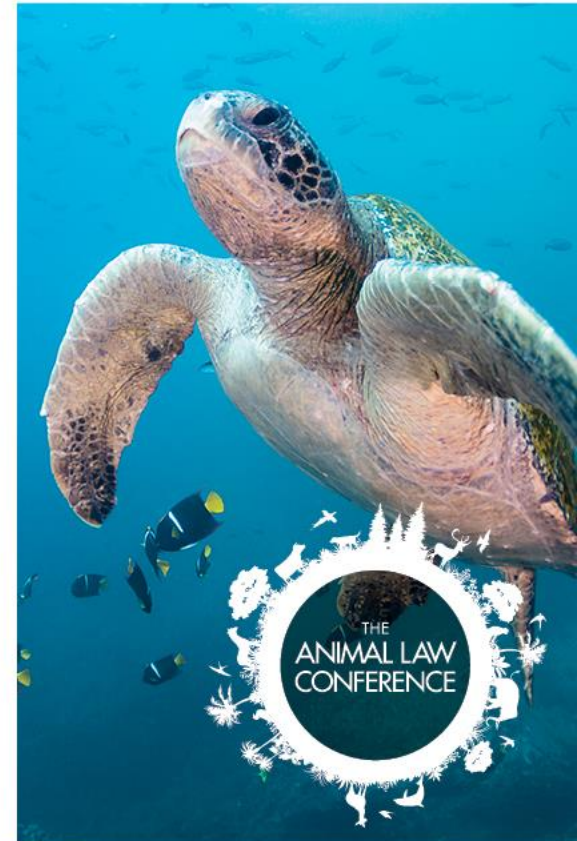
## Core Values

- “Collective healing through reciprocity, trust, respect, and joy.
- Intentional collaboration at the forefront to protect people and preserve our planet.
- Providing kin with access to opportunity to move us towards a just and thriving future.
- Establishing relationships in synchronicity with the land and people to shift power from patriarchal, colonized, and racist systems.”



# Seeding Sovereignty's Current Projects and Efforts

- “Reproductive justice.
- Mutual aid.
- Missing and surviving Indigenous Peoples.
- Climate justice and community security.
- Food sovereignty and ancestral acres farm and garden.
- Youth thrival and leadership initiative.
- Medicine Wheels Indigenous Youth Program.”





# Events that led to this critical conversation.

- **Animal Law Conference 2022 →**
- **Collaborative discussion between Seeding Sovereignty and ALDF →**
- **Critical questions that resulted and are important to grapple with:**
  - Why does animal law exist without a larger representation and stronger considerations for Indigenous Peoples and Indigenous Nations?
  - Why does animal law, in some circumstances, feel oppressive to Indigenous Peoples, their rights, and their needs?
  - How does animal law consider the different histories, traditions, cultures, and perspectives of Indigenous Peoples compared to those of Western cultures?
  - Specific to the U.S.: How does animal law account for the trauma and mental health issues that arise for Indigenous Peoples and that can be attributed to their relationships to the U.S. federal government, states, and their policies?
  - How can animal law be used as a tool to support and advocate for Indigenous Peoples and animals simultaneously? How can animal law exist within Social Justice otherwise?
  - How can advocates for Indigenous Peoples and advocates for animals work together to uplift each others' missions and the communities each advocate type strives to support?
  - How do we do this work while recognizing and appreciating differences we all bring to the "table," and that sometimes beliefs and policies do not always align?



# Some Background Information: Indigenous Nations Among (what is now called) the United States

## **(Some) Statistics for Indigenous Nations**

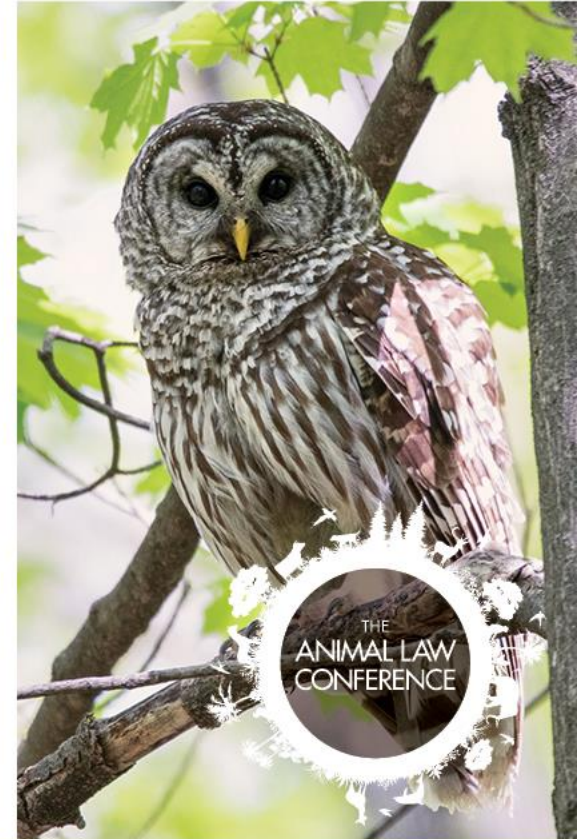
- 574 federally recognized tribes.
  - Excludes Indigenous Nations the federal government refuses to recognize.
- 326 federally recognized reservations.
  - 56.2 million acres.
- 3.1-8.75 million Indigenous Peoples and members of Indigenous Nations.
  - 20-30% live on reservations.
  - Survey results vary depending on source.

## **Jurisdictional Relationships (generalized and incomplete)**

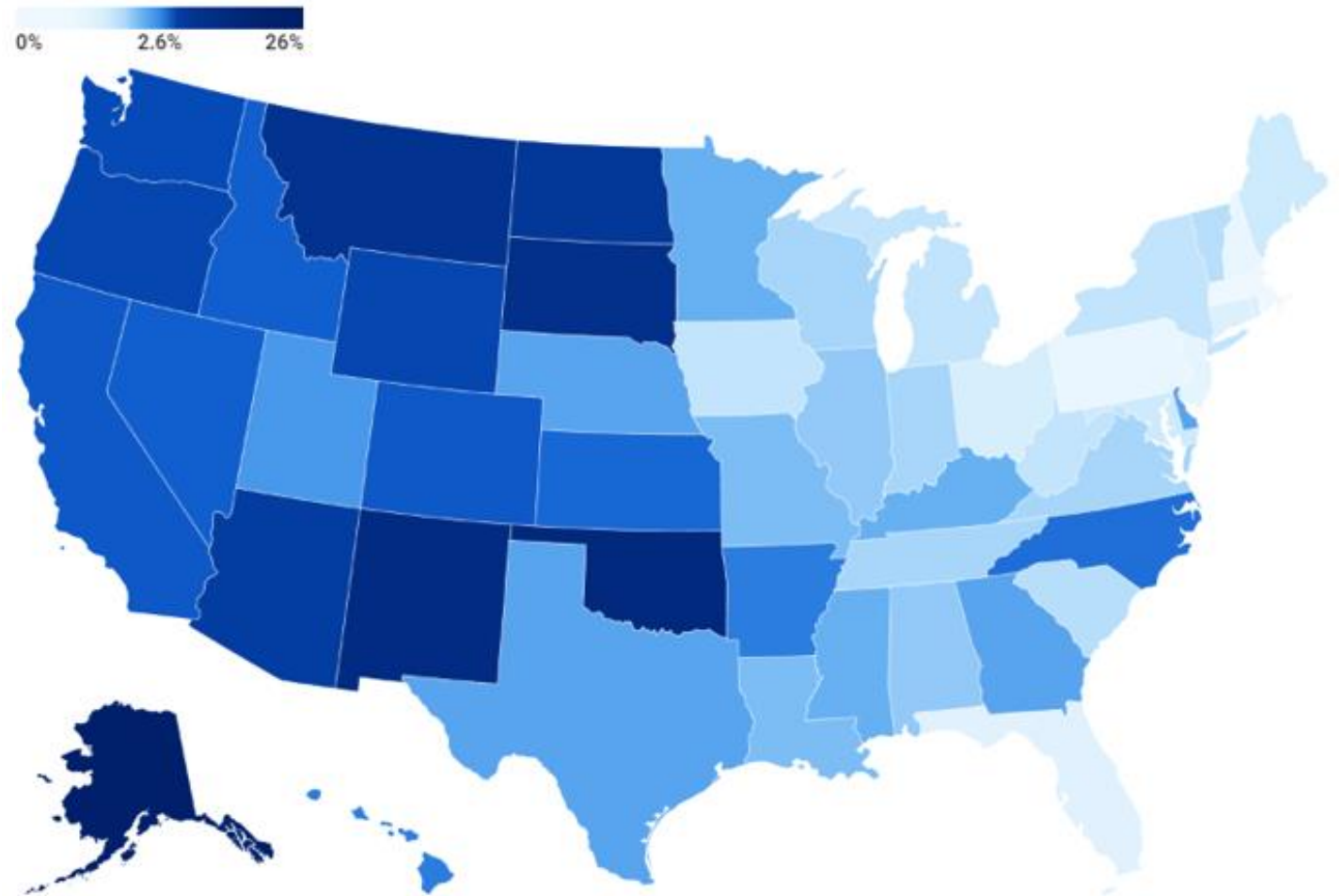
- Relationships with the U.S. federal government.
- Relationships with states.

## **Traditional and Cultural Relationships with Animals and the Environment (generalized and incomplete)**

... And where Indigenous Nations' relationships with the world meet U.S./Western relationships with the world.



Recent Census:  
**Indigenous  
Peoples**  
throughout  
(what is now  
called) the  
United States



Darker blues are higher than the national percentage, while lighter blues are lower.

\*This Census designation does not include the Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander category, which makes up 0.5% of the U.S. population, including 26.4% in Hawaii.

Map: Chris Gilligan • Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2021 American Community Survey



# Observed Challenges

## (through a 3<sup>rd</sup> party advocate lens, Criminal Justice Program)

### Jurisdictional Concerns

- With the U.S. federal government.
- With states.
- U.S. and state-provided animal protection ordinances that do not reflect beliefs, traditions, or values of Indigenous Nations.

### One Health

- U.S. federal government's historical and current impositions.
- Lack of access to resources.
- Poverty concerns (18-25% below poverty line).
- Mental health concerns.

### Competing Needs

- Supporting safety, justice, and representation for Indigenous Nations and their communities while supporting safety, justice, and representation for animals who live among Indigenous Nations and on reservations.

### Reevaluating Criminal Justice

- Developing responses and solutions that uplift Indigenous Nations and their members, while also uplifting animals who live among Indigenous Nations.



# Advocacy and Support for Indigenous Nations

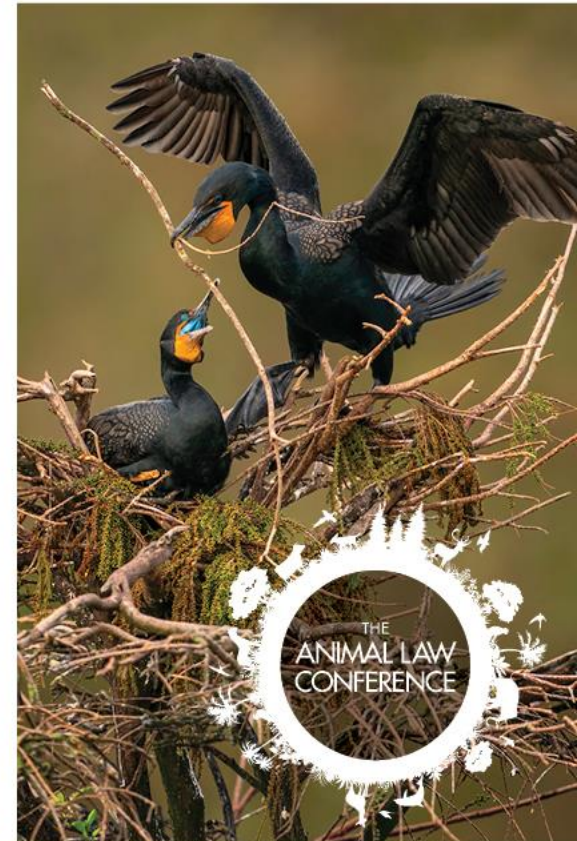
## Clients We Serve.

- Deference to each Indigenous Nation that is a client.
- Indigenous Nations tell us what they need, we support their independence, autonomy, and self-determination with resources they decide whether they want to use.

## Types of Animals.

## Some Projects.

- Animal management and anti-cruelty **ordinance drafting**.
- **Legal strategy development** to support implementation of humane and safe animal population management on reservations.
  - Collaboration with animal advocacy organizations with aligned advocacy efforts.
  - Article publications.
- **Supporting proposed state laws** that would benefit Indigenous Nations and animals (and **opposing proposed state laws** that would be deleterious to Indigenous Nations and animals).
- **Developing long-term relationships** with Indigenous Nations that want to work with us, so we can be a resource for them when they decide they need us.
- **Scholarships for students** who belong to an Indigenous Nation(s) and/or are interested in animal law's relationship to Indigenous law.







# Thank you!

Janet MacGillivray  
[Seedingsovereignty.org](http://Seedingsovereignty.org)

Jessica Chapman  
[jchapman@aldf.org](mailto:jchapman@aldf.org)

