



**National Indigenous Month – by Joanne Kittel, co-chair of View the Future** (first shared in November 2024)



In 1990, Congress passed and President George H. W. Bush signed into law a joint resolution designating the month of November as the first National American Indian Heritage Month (also known as Native American Indian Month).

November is National Indigenous Month. But what does that mean? A recognition of Indigenous history, values, beliefs and cultures for this

month? What about the rest of the year?

At View the Future, we believe there cannot have environmental protection without cultural protection. We practice that philosophy all year and in many different ways. Under the supervision of the Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians and Confederated Tribes of Coos, Lower Umpqua and Siuslaw Indians, VtF has published and periodically revised our accounts of the history of local Indigenous people. VtF has sponsored interpretive signs and a map of local Indigenous foods. We have also created two Land Acknowledgments that reflect the historical perspectives of each Tribe.



Over the years, we have helped fund Amanda Trail projects including two of the Amanda Bridges, the Amanda Trail portals and the Yaxaik Trail. We give presentations on local Indigenous history, sometimes having the honor to do so with Tribal members.

VtF supports and co-sponsors the annual New Year's Day Peace Hike, now approaching its 16th year. After the first Amanda statue was destroyed in a massive debris slide, we were able to acquire a second statue. We are the keepers of

that statue and the Amanda Gathering Area in partnership with the Yachats Trails Work Group.

Most importantly, we serve as advocates to protect the few archaeological and cultural sites that are left in our local area. We encourage landowners pursuing conservation easements to protect their scenic and natural landscape, and to protect any identified or cultural sites that may be found in the future. These projects and focuses are not undertaken in National Indigenous Month or on Indigenous Day. They are part of a commitment—all year and every year.

We honor our fellow land trusts and the Oregon Parks and Recreation Department which have donated lands back to local Tribes or co-manage lands with local Tribes. Siuslaw National Forest is also entering into co-management agreements.