



# Sitka Tribe of Alaska

Tribal Government for Sitka, Alaska

## 2020 Legislative Priorities

### Federal:

1. **Honor trust responsibilities**
  - a. Support and protect the ability of Alaska tribes to place land into trust
  - b. Dept. of Interior reorganization should not negatively affect tribes or diminish their sovereignty
  
2. **Essential fixes to the process of compacting under the Tribal Self-Governance Act with non-BIA agencies in the Department of the Interior**
  - a. Full support for indirect costs
  - b. Elimination of 90-day waiting period for agreements to go into effect and release of funds
  - c. Establish a definition for “inherently federal” in the context of tribal compacting through congressional hearings or legislation. STA has experienced NPS resistance to engaging in co-management pursuant to an Annual Funding Agreement through the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act. They have designated all top positions within the various divisions of the national park as performing inherently federal functions.
  
3. **Legislative fixes for Alaska exclusions**
  - a. Permanent funding mechanism for Tribal Courts
  - b. Reforms for lands in trust or restricted status
    - i. Land buyback/consolidation program for allotments or townsites that are getting fractionated as in the American Indian Probate Reform Act (AIPRA)
    - ii. Allow tribes to adjudicate estates according to tribal probate codes (as in AIPRA)
    - iii. Landowners able to make decisions about use of property by a majority (as in regulations in lower 48)
    - iv. Re-open allotment applications for eligible applicants who missed the deadline or were incorrectly denied, including native veterans
  - c. Remove moratorium language in Appropriations Act that requires Alaska tribes to provide their NAHASDA funds to the same entity as received them in 2005
  
4. **Tribal Transportation: Support an authentic Negotiated Rulemaking process**

**State:**

- 1. Safeguard the vitality of natural resources and the Tribe's and tribal citizens' inherent rights to subsistence and customary and traditional practices**
  - a. Herring research and management
  - b. Shift to comanagement model that includes the Tribe in meaningful role
- 2. Protect vulnerable populations**
  - a. Renew funding for utility and housing assistance
  - b. Provide funding for social services for children under jurisdiction of tribal courts
  - c. Elder services
  - d. Headstart
  - e. Inflation-proof base student allocation
- 3. Increased Ferry Service**
- 4. Provide meaningful consultation opportunities with state agencies, departments, and boards, including the Department of Fish and Game and the Board of Fish**
- 5. Increased cooperation**
  - a. Cooperative agreements with state courts to divert cases involving tribal citizens from state to tribal court
  - b. Cooperative agreements/compacts for child welfare and associated funding

**Local:**

- 1. Consultation**
  - a. Protect cemeteries and sacred places
    - i. Appropriate zoning of cemeteries – finish designation of cemeteries
    - ii. Consult the Tribe when sites for development or projects are considered, especially any that will move earth or establish new structures
  - b. Include dedicated native community seats on boards and commissions
    - i. Consult the Tribe on appropriate appointments for native community seats
- 2. Cooperation**
  - a. Address rising cost of living – utilities and taxes
  - b. Reduce Crime – expand cooperative agreements between the Tribe, the City, and local agencies to combat substance abuse and to divert offenders to tribal court
  - c. Focus/address expanding population of Homeless in Sitka
  - d. Expand coordinated community response to sexual assault and domestic violence
  - e. Cultural sensitivity
    - i. Encourage native hire, increase numbers of AI/AN employed at City
  - f. Update Payment for Services Agreement and Memorandum of Understanding as appropriate