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Ione Quigley, the Rosebud Sioux's historic preservation officer, sits after a 2021 ceremony at the U.S. Army's Carlisle Barracks. (photo: AP)

grist.org/indigenous/tribal-historic-preservation-officer-trump-budget-energy-sacred-site/

How the Trump Administration Is Putting Hundreds of Sacred Sites at Risk

Maria Parazo Rose / Grist

Indigenous nations are facing impossible deadlines and vanishing budgets amid sweeping federal rollbacks.

Any time a federal agency wants to develop a project in Wyoming — an oil and gas lease, a pipeline, a dam, a transmission line, a solar array — it has to go through Crystal C’Bearing first. C’Bearing is Northern Arapaho and the tribal historic preservation officer, or THPO, for the Northern Arapaho tribe, so if a new wind farm is proposed, for example, she determines if any tribal areas will be impacted by the project.

“It’s a challenging job, but I feel like it’s really important work,” C’Bearing said. “I feel a sense of gratitude that I’m able to do this and that I’m able to try, in my best ability, to preserve and protect what we have.”

C’Bearing’s scope extends beyond her home on the Wind River Reservation, to any and all lands ceded by treaty, routes tribal members took during the removal process, burial sites, and religious places. That means she reviews projects across 16 states in addition to Wyoming, from Wisconsin to Montana, New Mexico to Arkansas, and all points in between — traditional homelands of the Northern Arapaho and other Indigenous nations, acquired by the United States as it forcefully expanded westward. Because of that range, hundreds of federal proposals and reports flood her email inbox every week, as is the case with [227 other THPOs](#) working for their respective nations. Many have overlapping historic homelands and histories.

Tribal historic preservation officers, like C’Bearing, are often a first line of defense against destructive federal projects, and rely on a range of skills from traditional ecological knowledge to a cultural and historic knowledge of places and landscapes. Now, their work is under threat.

In January, President Donald Trump [declared a national energy emergency](#) to speed the development of fossil fuel projects, mines, pipelines, and other energy-related infrastructure, [cutting the amount of time](#) federal agencies are required to notify Indigenous nations before starting a project. Now, as Trump’s [proposed budget for 2026](#) works its way through Congress, the fund supporting the [national THPO program is bracing](#) for a 94 percent budget cut. On top of that, the Trump administration has yet to distribute THPO funds promised for 2025.

Traditionally, THPOs like C’Bearing have 30 days to review a project: 30 days to review federal reports, conduct site visits, identify artifacts or burial grounds, and collaborate with tribal members, sometimes from other tribes. According to C’Bearing, that window was already tight, but under Trump’s energy emergency, that deadline is now seven days. And as the year rolls on, C’Bearing’s budget is evaporating. If the administration doesn’t release the THPO funds already promised, she’ll be out of a job come September.

“If this is the moment that breaks the system, there’s not going to be anything there to catch the THPOs,” said Valerie Grussing, executive director of the National Association of Tribal Historic Preservation Officers.

The THPO program was born out of [requirements established by the 1966 National Historic Preservation Act](#) — the legislation responsible for preserving and protecting historic and

archaeological resources in the United States. At the time, public concern about historic places being altered or destroyed by federally-funded infrastructure as well as urban renewal projects prompted the federal government to take legislative action. The act mandates that all federal agencies identify any impacts their projects might have on areas important to states and tribes, and notify the public about those impacts. But Indigenous nations hold a particularly important role: Agencies must consult with tribes regardless of whether the project is located on, or off, federally recognized Indian reservations. That caveat fits within [a broader context of treaty law and rights](#), as well as the federal government's trust responsibilities requiring that agencies put "good-faith effort" into consultations.

If a THPO conducts their analysis and finds there's no risk of a federal project impacting cultural or historic resources, the plan moves forward. If a THPO finds there is a risk, the tribe, federal agency, and state work out a formal agreement explaining how the impacts will be resolved or mitigated. That part of the process can take years.

With a significantly shorter review period, however, THPOs will have to make hard choices about the hundreds of reports that come in every week, the existing backlog, and prioritizing "emergency" projects at the cost of others. That means tribes won't have a voice in how projects are determined on their homelands, putting countless cultural and historical sites at risk. Many of those sites are undeveloped wilderness areas, like with Pe'Sla in the Black Hills — a sacred ceremonial site for the Sioux, Lakota, and other nations — now facing [exploratory drilling for graphite](#). Many of the world's most resilient forests, like Pe'Sla, are [protected by Indigenous peoples](#) and provide climate change mitigation benefits by storing carbon.

"A lot of times we still have to take a deeper look and double check and triple check some of these areas and then coordinate across tribes if needed," said Raphael Wahwassuck, THPO for the Prairie Band Potawatomi Nation. "It's pretty unrealistic to have good work happen in that short of a window."

As of April, [186 projects](#) with an emergency designation have been cleared to begin construction. The designation includes controversial projects like [Line 5](#) in Michigan, prompting [seven Indigenous nations to walk away](#) from federal negotiations. Fifteen states have [sued the administration](#) alleging there is no energy emergency and that the declaration [illegally bypasses additional reviews of federal projects](#), like environmental impact or endangered species assessments.

"My worry is everybody is going to use the emergency declaration in one way or another on all of these projects and we're just going to be bombarded with a ton of them," C'Bearing said. "It's just another added-on thing that we need to pay attention to, among the other hundreds of things that we do here."

But beyond the truncated review timeline, funding is running out. Congressionally approved and appropriated funds for 2025 are still being held by the Office of Management and Budget, or OMB, awaiting additional review by the Trump administration. Neither the OMB nor the White House responded to requests for comments for this story. An official with the Department of Interior said that pending financial assistance obligations, including grants, are being reviewed for compliance with Trump's recent executive orders.

“If this continues, oversight action should be taken—up to and including legal remedies to enforce the law. It’s not a suggestion. It’s not optional. The law requires these funds to be spent.,” Congresswoman Chellie Pingree, a Democratic representative from Maine, wrote in an email to Grist. She’s a member of the House Committee on Appropriations. “Holding up funding for tribal governments is wrong—morally and legally. Many tribes have been waiting for decades for basic investments in schools, housing, and infrastructure. And now, even when the funding has been approved by Congress, they’re being forced to wait again because of what appears to be a politically motivated delay that violates the law.”

Despite the outsized importance THPOs play for Indigenous nations, very few tribes can dedicate additional funds to maintain those roles. The majority rely entirely on federal funding, as the program was designed, Grussing said, and that allocation has only ever provided an average of one staff member per THPO office, per tribe.

“It’s been more difficult for tribes to prioritize historic preservation than usual. It’s usually pretty difficult, but now we’re seeing similar effects for tribal education, health, and housing,” Grussing said. Trump’s proposed 2026 budget cuts \$911 million from the Bureau of Indian Affairs and the Bureau of Indian Education. “Expecting tribes to step up and prioritize historic preservation during this time is not realistic.”

With funding cuts across multiple points of tribal operations, tribes are having to make choices like funding their health and safety — or a THPO program. Wahwassuck’s concern is that if multiple tribes lose their THPOs and staff working on consultation requests, conditions will effectively go back to a pre-consultation period, as in the 1960s. In that world, tribal nations wouldn’t have opportunities to intervene or protect lands and cultural resources.

“There’s been a lot of profit made off of the blood and bones of our ancestors and off of the lands that our tribes have had to cede and be removed from,” Wahwassuck said. “I hear it mentioned pretty regularly that this administration wants to recognize tribal sovereignty and honor the trust and treaty responsibility. However, these funding actions directly go against those statements.”

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[Donna Cossette](#) It's been a little difficult to celebrate special moments in my life. I finally got back into giving tours and interviews again.

David Hurst Thomas just informed me the article we've been working on will be published in the next Archeology Magazine and we made the front cover. Long story how it came about, but I'll save that for later.

Been also working with NV state parks at Fort Churchill on their new new visitors center. I only wished they didn't take such a soft approach on telling the history of the 1860 Paiute Wars. I'm hoping programing will make up for it. I'm also still holding out hope for a traditiinal Paiute camp site at the park too, so we can tell our story. I can dream, right! Untill then I'll keep

chopping away at them to make thus happen.





[theeternalsong.org](http://theeternalsong.org)

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[Join The Eternal Song film premiere and 7-Day Gathering with Indigenous Voices to connect with ancestral wisdom and healing.](#)

## Australian Indigenous Art in a Whole New Space

Several years in the making, the new exhibition highlights a momentous new gift by Seattle-based collectors Robert Kaplan and Margaret Levi who, in 2023, gave the Museum more than 70 works of art by 50 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders from all over the continent. *Eternal Signs: Indigenous Australian Art from the Kaplan and Levi Collection* celebrates the connections between the ancient and the contemporary.

Opening May 31, and inaugurating our new E. L. Wiegand Feature Gallery on the third floor of the new Charles + Stacie Mathewson Education and Research Center, this expansive showcase features works by 36 contemporary artists from 15 distinct Aboriginal groups.

For deeper learning, join Apsara DiQuinzio and Bill Fox on June 6 for an insight-packed conversation about how these works create ecological understanding. And while you're here, step outside into the new Thomas and Pauline Tusher Sculpture Garden.

LEARN MORE






## ***Some Rhode Island Indian History***

Sarah Muckamug: 956 Old Smithfield Road, Isaac Wilkinson home. 1829. Muckamug, a Nipmuc Indian, indentured to Col. Joseph Whipple, of Providence, for 12 years, had four children with Aaron Whipple, a Black slave of Whipple. Muckamug left Whipple after he refused to "maintain" their children together. She was allowed to build a wigwam on this property by the Wilkinsons. She later had another child with Fortune Burnee, a free Black man living in the community. Sarah's life shows the complex role of marriage between First Peoples and individuals of African descent. Read: Daniel R. Mandell, "The Saga of Sarah Muckamugg, Indian and African American Intermarriage in Colonial New England," in Martha Hodes, ed., *Sex, Love, Race: Crossing Boundaries in North American History*.

**+ Daily-Ceasar Cemetery:** Located alongside the driveway to 1010 Hartford Avenue, which connects to Borden Avenue. Rhode Island Historical Cemetery Johnston #44 reportedly holds African American and Native American decedents. Among them is Annjemima Daily, daughter of Roby Ceasar and wife of John Daily who passed away at age 17 in 1826. For a list of graves: [http://rihistoriccemeteries.org/newlistgraves.aspx?ceme\\_no=JN044](http://rihistoriccemeteries.org/newlistgraves.aspx?ceme_no=JN044)

**+ Dolly Walmsley** (later changed to Onsley) is buried in Pocasset cemetery. Born as Dolly Smith in Connecticut in 1827 to a Black father named Ira Smith and Native American mother, she married Samuel Judson Onsley, moved to Johnston and had between them thirteen children. Learn more *here*: *California T* and [http://rihistoriccemeteries.org/newsearchcemeterydetail.aspx?ceme\\_no=JN044](http://rihistoriccemeteries.org/newsearchcemeterydetail.aspx?ceme_no=JN044)

Wannamoissett Marker: Sits in the sidewalk beside the Silver Spring Golf Course on the west side of Pawtucket Avenue at the end of Wheeler Avenue. Marks the original boundary between the Wannamoissett section of the 1620 Pokanoket settlement of "Sowams", purchased by John Browne from the Massasoit Ousamequin in 1643, and the town of Rehoboth. The Brownes were among the early slave holding families in the area. John Browne's daughter, Mary, was married to Thomas Willett who listed eight "Negro slaves" in his will. John Browne's son, James, owned at least one "Negro slave", "Matte", that he willed to his son, Jabez. <https://sowamsheritagearea.org/wp/wannamoissett/>

 **California Trail Days:** Fun and free for the entire family, get to Elko to see an 1850s pioneer wagon encampment come to life. Take part in day-long activities from interactive pioneer and Native American camps, gold Panning, wagon rides, quilt making, basket weaving, archery, and axe throwing, happening at Elko's California Trail Center (1 Interpretive Center Way) on June 7 and 8 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. (Saturday) and 3 p.m. (Sunday).

**> Aerosols from penguin excrement** may help trigger cloud formation, reducing solar heating and helping stabilize local areas of the Antarctic climate, study finds ([More](#))



Join us for the Alaska Regional Youth Summit, scheduled to be held on July 23–24, 2025, in Anchorage, Alaska. Hosted by the Intertribal Agriculture Council’s Youth Program, this two-day event brings together Native youth from across the Alaska region to connect and learn about agriculture. Topics include traditional knowledge, food sovereignty, regenerative practices, and career paths in agriculture and natural resources.

## **Glen Canyon National Recreation Area betrayed by Utah's politicians**

Earlier this month, three members of Utah’s congressional delegation—Representative Celeste Maloy and Senators Mike Lee and John Curtis—succeeded in their mission to strip protections from some of the most fragile and breathtaking places in Glen Canyon National Recreation Area.

Using an obscure law from Newt Gingrich’s 1996 playbook—the Congressional Review Act—they introduced and passed House Joint Resolution 60, legislation that undermines the National Park Service by forcing it to scrap a science-backed rule that protected 25 miles of delicate wilderness from damage by off-road vehicles.

The rule impacted just 6% of park roads and *less than half a percent* of the park’s acreage. Still, Maloy, Lee, and Curtis pushed ahead—determined to block even this narrow but important swath of protection. Passage of this resolution means that the Orange Cliffs, Gunsight Butte, and the Maze District of Canyonlands National Park (one of the most wild and remote areas in the lower 48) will now be invaded by noisy, destructive off-road vehicle.

They claimed to be defending access. What they really did was hand over some of Utah’s quietest backcountry to a vocal and destructive fringe, choosing performative politics over the integrity of irreplaceable wilderness areas.

Sadly, none of this was out of character. Rep. Maloy has quickly made a career of turning her back on the lands she represents. Sen. Mike Lee has never seen an environmental policy he didn’t want to dismantle. And Sen. John Curtis, who pretends to champion climate and conservation, has once again shown us where he really stands when it matters most.

Using the Congressional Review Act to overturn a rule this reasonable and niche is more than extreme—it’s unprecedented and, frankly, bizarre. But it signals the lengths to which anti-public-lands lawmakers will now go. We should expect more of this: short-sighted policy maneuvers, rushed votes, and high-pressure campaigns designed to erode protections with as little public scrutiny or input as possible.

In order to meet these kinds of reckless assaults, SUWA must be ready to respond in real time—mobilizing grassroots pressure, leveraging our legal and policy expertise, and organizing swift, strategic advocacy actions to defend the redrock. We're disappointed we didn't win this time, but we'll continue to keep fighting to protect Glen Canyon using every tool that we can moving forward.

Thank you, Hanna Larsen, Staff Attorney, Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance

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As a new (or emergent) technology, "AI" is like any new technology (fire, typesetting, cars, processed food, synthetic drugs). They hold both good and bad potentials, applications, and use. It is up to the consumer to weigh the good and bad, determine the risks of using that technology. From my perspective, AI can do much to lessen research time but like GPS and block chain, it may capture mis or incorrect information, enshrining such in the written record and very hard to remove. This may prove advisarial to tribes about whom much misinformation has been recorded. Here's a few more articles on the subject, just to whet your internal debates and decisions about the adoption and/or application of such to your world. sdc

The Coming Disruption

On Wednesday, *Axios* ran an important piece based on an interview with Dario Amodei, the CEO of Anthropic, a leading U.S. AI company.

Amodei issued what amounts to a stark warning, namely, that AI will be a disruptive force on a scale few appreciate, with consequences arriving sooner than policymakers and the public are prepared for. More specifically, he predicts that AI will eliminate a good many white-collar jobs in the service sector, including technology, finance, law, consulting, and beyond. He is especially worried that entry-level jobs, potentially half of them within the next one to five years, will be the first to go, leaving many young people unemployed and unable to start their careers.

This would not be the first mass job displacement in modern history. There was the agricultural revolution in the twentieth century, in which mechanical innovations dramatically reduced the numbers of people employed on farms. Many found their way to cities and industrial jobs. More recently there has been the loss of industrial employment, some because of trade, but mostly as a result of technological improvements that reduced the need for human labor. Some of those displaced took up service sector jobs or gigs of one sort or another, but many became long-term unemployed or under-employed with a host of adverse economic, political, and social ramifications. This will only get worse with robotics, AI, 3D printing, and other developments in applied technologies.

What makes this looming AI-caused disruption even more troubling is that there is no emerging sector of the economy to absorb workers who will lose their jobs or fail to find them. Amodei's point, which alas is a good one, is that we as a society are unprepared for this emerging inevitability. We need to think hard and fast about how to tailor our educational system for this situation. And we need to think equally hard about universal basic income (UBI) and how it could be paid for in a context in which a larger number of citizens will not be able to find work. Amodei proposes a potential model in his *Axios* interview. As should be obvious, the potential for this coming economic disruption to cause political and social disruption is high. I do not

claim to have the answers, but I do know we cannot afford to put off the necessary research and debate.

What is AI slop? Why you are seeing more fake photos and videos in your social media feeds

Published: May 28, 2025 12:15pm EDT

https://theconversation.com/what-is-ai-slop-why-you-are-seeing-more-fake-photos-and-videos-in-your-social-media-feeds-255538?utm_source=firefox-newtab-en-us

[White House acknowledges errors in "Make America Healthy Again" report.](#)

The report ([read here](#)), led by Health Secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr., has come under scrutiny after researchers and journalists found it cited several studies that do not exist or misrepresented the findings of actual studies. The administration attributed the errors to "formatting issues." Critics argue the errors raise questions about the report's credibility and the role of potential AI-generated content.

Inside OpenAI's Stargate megafactory and the [\\$500B bet on the future of AI](#).

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Anthropic Claude

- Generate text and code
- Analyze documents and images
- Free and paid options; account required

[Learn more about Claude](#)

ChatGPT

- Generate text, images, and code
- Analyze documents and images
- Free and paid options; account required for some countries and tasks

[Learn more about ChatGPT](#)

Google Gemini

- Generate text, images, and code
- Analyze images (free) and documents (paid)
- Free and paid options; account required

[Learn more about Gemini](#)

HuggingChat

- Generate text and code
- Switch between a diverse set of open models

- Free; account required after a certain number of requests

[Learn more about HuggingChat](#)

Le Chat Mistral

- Generate text and

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[The New York Times and Amazon ink AI licensing deal](#) (TechCrunch)

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Is A.I. the new colonialism?

<https://the.ink/p/watch-is-ai-the-new-colonialism?utm=next-episode>

- 22 young Americans aged 7-25 have [filed a lawsuit against the Trump administration](#), arguing that by boosting oil and gas production and slowing the transition to green energy, federal officials are violating their constitutional rights to life and liberty. They also say the government has violated the “danger doctrine,” a legal principle meant to prevent officials from inflicting injury upon their citizens. The plaintiffs are from extreme-weather-ravaged states like Florida and Hawaii.
- Along those same lines, an analysis released yesterday found that [more than \\$14 billion in clean energy investments in the U.S. have been canceled or delayed this year](#). The analysis, completed by E2 and Atlas Public Policy, estimates that the losses since January have also cost 10,000 new clean energy jobs. “The House’s plan coupled with the administration’s focus on stomping out clean energy and returning us to a country powered by coal and gas guzzlers is causing businesses to cancel plans, delay their plans and take their money and jobs to other countries instead,” E2 executive director Bob Keefe said.

- The Supreme Court handed down an 8-0 decision that will [allow a multibillion-dollar oil railroad expansion in Utah](#). The project will quadruple oil production in the remote area, but the ruling will have sweeping impacts on National Environmental Policy Act reviews.
- Environmental groups worried about increased wildfire risk, the effect of additional crude oil production, and increased refining in Gulf Coast states, but the justices felt that regulators were right to consider the direct effects of the project, rather than the wider ripple effects.

NYTimes: Under Trump, a Native American Mascot Debate Is Turned Upside Down

<https://www.nytimes.com/2025/05/30/nyregion/school-mascots-trump-civil-rights.html?smid=nytcore-ios-share&referringSource=articleShare&sgrp=c&pvid=2D461514-8AC3-416E-9548-C520C176ADFE>

Plastic Kills... Again! Short Film Contest

PPC has teamed up with Earth Angel for a second round of our popular *Plastic Kills* short film contest. We're challenging filmmakers to create original horror short films that highlight the terrors of plastic pollution with a grand prize of \$3,000. Submissions will be open **July 1–September 15, 2025**. [Learn more](#).

★ **Bahamas Plastic Movement's Free Manual**

The [Plastic Pollution Education & Ocean Conservation Summer Camp Training Manual](#) is a free, comprehensive guide designed for teachers, environmental organizations, and schools to educate, inspire, and activate youth in the fight against plastic pollution. [Get the manual](#)

The Return of Aztec Floating Farms

In Mexico City, a 700-year-old Aztec farming technique is giving a sustainable edge to modern agriculture.

- [The empire the Aztecs couldn't conquer](#)
- [The Discovery of the Americas' Long-Lost 'Rome'](#)
- [Spain's ingenious water maze](#)



https://getpocket.com/explore/item/the-return-of-aztec-floating-farms?utm_source=firefox-newtab-en-us

[Ancient Mayan city unearthed in Guatemala, including pyramids.](#)

Archaeologists have uncovered the remains of a nearly 3,000-year-old Mayan city called Los Abuelos in northern Guatemala, featuring pyramids, monuments, and a unique canal system. Los Abuelos means "The Grandparents" and gets its name from two human-like rock sculptures at the site. The finding suggests the city was a major ceremonial center during the [Middle Preclassic period](#).

[Trump picks right-wing lawyer and podcaster who promoted 2020 election lies as watchdog agency head](#)