

# The Indigenous Vision Interactive Map

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**Abstract.** This presentation focused on environmental stewardship program developed by Souta Calling Last and her organization, Indigenous Vision. The virtual reclamation of our landscape narrative will be achieved through the science of Indigenous geography and map making technology that includes virtual reality experiences. The presentation also highlighted the coding and development process of the map and app. Including the concept of geo-fencing Sacred Place Ecosystems.

**Keywords.** Indigenous, virtual reality, cultural reclamation

## 1 Bio/Background

Souta Calling Last (Blackfeet/Blood) is the Founder and Executive Director of Indigenous Vision, a national educational nonprofit founded in 2015. Her work on land and water protection started in childhood cleaning beaver ponds. She continued volunteering with streamside cleanups, restorations, community water education, and mining contamination cleanup while obtaining a Bachelor's degree from the University of Montana in Environmental Studies Water Resources. She later gained experience with her tribe as a Water Resource Specialist and Drinking Water Operator and obtained her Master's degree in Innovative Leadership and Change Management from the University of Phoenix. Before founding Indigenous Vision, Souta served as an Environmental Specialist in a National Tribal Drinking Water Program. Her connection to the landscape remained unhindered and she continued to organize lake shore clean-ups at drinking water reservoirs in the Phoenix area. Souta believes the land is a storybook of information filled with ecological and climate knowledge and that honoring ancestral observation will protect the land and water and will promote ideal human health and wellness. She also believes that protecting cultures at risk starts with protecting the environment.

## 2 Presentation Description

The Indigenous Vision Interactive Map Presentation is centered on empowering the Indigenous identity through virtual reclamation of traditional territories and asserting the Indigenous right and benefit of environmental stewardship. The online resource and workshop curriculum will empower leaders, community members, and activists with a

tool grounded in Tribal Ecological Knowledge (TEK), reinforced by western science and is delivered with innovative mapping and app technologies that is educational, interactive and entertaining. The virtual reclamation of our landscape narrative will be achieved through the science of Indigenous geography and map making technology that includes virtual reality experiences. TEK explains characteristics of the landscape and eye witness accounts of climate change marking the coming and going of various species and eras. The Interactive Map and App is a revolutionary networking resource and educational tool that provides a platform to learn about landscape history, culture, environmental science and efforts of protection. The project will allow for a large support network of native and non-native alike to educate and assist in the protection of land and water. Mapping layers focus on the risks and challenges to Indigenous stewardship and the close proximity of damaging industries and expansion of modern development. The project will help minimize stories of conquest and genocide and allow the indigenous narrative to stand side-by-side or replace racist narratives. Her presentation will also highlight the coding and development process of the map and app. Including the concept of geo-fencing Sacred Place Ecosystems. Scattered throughout the environment on the reservation and off, are cultural places of significance, each location requires a thriving “sacred place ecosystem” that is not commonly integrated in current environmental management, and not included at all in current environmental education.