

Tribes take stand against MMIP crisis

March 13, 2022



Last week, the Tolowa Dee-ni' Nation Tribal Council passed a resolution addressing the Missing and Murdered Indigenous People (MMIP) crisis. The Tribal Council and Community and Family Wellness Department felt it was vital that we stand in support of the Yurok Tribe's Declaration of Emergency on Missing, Murdered, and Indigenous Women.

Dorothy Wait, Community and Family Wellness Director, shared, "we are laying down the framework for proactive responses in the future. Native Americans are overrepresented in more negative aspects of crime, especially women. This is a nationwide public health crisis."

Indigenous women and young girls are predominantly vulnerable as little to no data are tracked in Northern California. The United States Department of Justice found that American Indian/Alaska Native women face murder rates more than ten times the national average.

Homicide is the 3rd leading cause of death of indigenous people ages 10-24 and the 4th leading cause of death of indigenous people ages 25-34.

The Nation will work to coordinate efforts across the Nation's departments, federal agencies, Tribes and Tribal organizations, local law enforcement organizations, and community-based organizations to create a Tribal Community Response plan (TCRP) to increase the response to the disappearance or murder of indigenous people.

We encourage other agencies, tribes, organizations, and community-based organizations to bring awareness to this critical topic. As stated by the Yurok Tribe, "the intergenerational impacts of years of violence, trafficking and murder through missions, massacres, forced relocation, boarding schools, widespread removal of children from their families through the child welfare system, disproportionate incarceration, police violence, and high rates of gender violence are still playing out to this day, and directly contribute to issues like MMIW."

Violence against indigenous people is a severe violation of human rights. The effects range from immediate to multiple long-term physical, sexual and mental costs, including death for indigenous people. Advocating and investing in the protection of indigenous people sets a pathway towards equality, eradication of poverty, economic growth, and overall wellness in our communities.

The Tolowa Dee-ni' Nation is a federally recognized Indian Tribe of Tolowa Dee-ni' People. The Nation's headquarters are located 3 miles south of the Oregon-California border in the Pacific Northwest of California. The Tribe's general membership consists of over 1,900 citizens. The Nation strives every day to make Del Norte County and Curry County a great place to live and work.