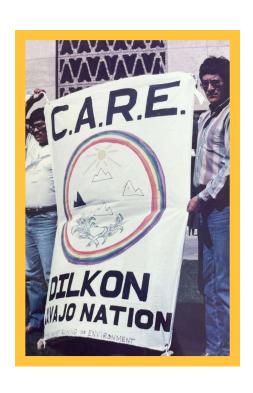


June 1990: First Protecting Mother Earth Conference



First Protecting Mother Earth Conference
Dilkon, Arizona Navajo Nation
hosted by C.A.R.E
(Citizens Against Ruining Our Environment)
Dine/Navajo community group that defeated a
proposed hazardous waste incinerator

1990 Gallup Independent Article

Dilkon environmental meet stresses unity

By Richard Sitts

Dine Bureau
DILKON, Ariz. — Words and ideas proved stronger than the toxic waste at which they were directed Friday,

as Indian tribal members from throughout the United States gathered to just say no. The "Protecting Mother Earth: The Toxic Threat to Indian Lands"

conference got underway at the Dilkon rodeo grounds Friday morning and is to continue through Sunday. It is being hosted by the Dilkon gras-sroots group, Citizens Against Ruin-ing Our Environment.

Speakers took turns explaining the

are facing. Tribes from Alaska, Wis-consin, Washington, Maine, Florida, Nevada South Dakota, Minnesota, Oklahoma, Missouri, California and Canada were represented.

"We want to get unity out of this conference," said Vickie McCullough, a Cherokee from Tahlequah, Okla. "It doesn't make any differ-ence what tribe we are, we're all one. The positive thing is, we're all

ers in Florida are clearing land and contaminating water in the process, he said. Meanwhile, the talk of toxic waste incinerators has just begun.

"I want to get more information on incinerators and how to fight back on the other problems," Billie Clifford Cornelius, from the Onei-

Danny Billie, a member of the traditional Seminole Tribe in Florida, came to the conference to learn how to fight for environmental

area," Cornelius said. "As Indian people, we were the caretalters of this land and we fell away from it. It's good to see this, Indian people from all over the U.S. and Canada, joining hands and working

Much of Friday's talk was directmuch of Friday's talk was direct-ed at the toxic waste contractors who have been approaching Indian tribes with promises of money and jobs.

"These people who come in aren't worried about anyone except their own people," said Paul Rodarte, a Paiute-Shoshone from Stillwater,

these executives want to live in this Nev. "They bring in their own high paid people and then hire menial

Thomas Banyacya, from Kykotsmovi, delivered a message from the Hopi elders. "Maybe we can take some of these uranium spillings to Washington and spread it around the White House and tell them, 'Don't worry, it's not going to hurt you,"

Banyacya said.
There wasn't a Navajo council delegate in sight Friday, though a handful of tribal officials did attend. Presidential candidates Rosalyn Curtis

Please see TOXIC, page 2.

• Toxic ...

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pooled together.

Hank Moore, from the Navajo Di-

vision of Health, said the tribe's En-vironmental Protection Agency has just developed a solid waste code that should go before the tribal council this summer or fall.

Harris Francis and Klara Kelly, from the Navajo Historic Preserva-tion Program, said that the tribe's culture needs to be preserved along with the land and environment.

The program is especially concerned with protecting holy sites throughout the reservation, Francis

Mineral resource development often can pose a direct threat to cultural resources, Kelly said. Environmental issues sometimes can divide a community, which can make it harder to preserve the traditions, she added

The Dilkon community experi-

enced somewhat of a split when a and Nancy Evans came to listen and in the environmental spirit, carcolled together.

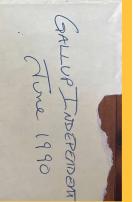
Citizens Against Ruining Our Environment was born out of the success-ful defeat, while some of the Dilkon chapter establishment was for it

CARE President Al Joe said he was pleased with the tarnout of local participants, as well as those from other tribes. Organizing the threeday event took a lot of work and there was no local chapter support, he added.

"We've been labeled as troublemakers and activists," Joe said.

However, CARE has received a lot of support from the international environmental group, Greenpeace. Even though Greenpeace financed the conference, San Francisco representative Bradley Angel down-played the Greenpeace role.

"We're not here to tell people what to do, but just to provide information," Angel said.



1990 St. Lewis Post Dispatch Article

Indian Nations Fight -Toxic Waste Invasion

By Bill Lambracht

Post-Bispatch Washington Bureau

DILKON, Ariz. — An unprecedented "toxics powwow" drew Indians from across North America this weekend to discuss ways to resist pollution threats from invading toxic waste operators.

Many people throughout the United States don't realize what is hapgoing on or near our reservations."

Field Johnny Jackson, co-chief of the
Michitat Indians, of Washington state.

Jackson's irribe is fighting a propospor saandfill near their reservation.

Mapproyed, the landfill would cover a
contract of Indian burial ground.

Tal've often wondered what it would be like if we hauled our garbage and disposed of it where their cavalry was builed, or one of their presidents," Jackson said.

Leaders and activists from more than 20 tribes in 16 states traveled to Navajo land in Arizona to talk over what many see as threats from commercial waste operators. About 150 people attended.

In 100-degree weather at a rodeo ground, they sweated both the heat and new conflicts between beliefs about the sanctity of land and the bountles from waste ventures.

Many reported longstanding problems from toxic waste, uranium mining and careless use of herbicides on tribal lands.

Breaking tradition, the Indians

linked scattered reports of waste plans into a pattern that stretches across the country and includes Alaska and Canada.

"In a few years, this could turn us into tombies," warned Guy White Thunder, 68, an Ogiela Sloux from South Dekota. His tribe is considering a non-toxic landfill proposed by Amcor Corp., of Torrington, Conn.

James Ransom, a Mohawk from New York, said his tribe had received seven or eight waste offers since last year. They turned all offers down.

Part of the Mohawk Reservation already is a Superfund site scheduled for federal clean-up because of toxici PCBs (polyychlorinated biphenyls) from manufacturing nearby.

Like others at the gathering, Ransom spoke of conflicts between wastes and Indian teachings. For instance, turtles are revered in Indian, lore. In Indians' sauns-like "sweat lodges," but rocks that make steam are arranged for the rituals into the shape of a turtle.

Ransom said that snapping turties routinely found on Mohawk land are so heavily laden with chemicals that their tissue would be declared hazard-ous waste under federal law. Poisoned frogs, he said, manage only one jump and then fail over on their sides.

"We have to use tradition to educate people about Mother Earth," Ransom

The Indians talked of ways to equip

tribal lands

Breaking tradition, the Indians charted campaigns to publicize their concerns and to form alliances with non-Indian environmental groups.

On Saturday, they set up a network to share details on waste operators and promised to help one another with economic development that doesn't rely on garbage.

Tribes are promised \$1 million or more a year plus jobs for opening up land for incinerator and landfill operations. Some get promises of relief from their own waste accumulation over the years.

Substantial corporations as well as fly-by-night operators are looking at Indian lands, federal authorities say.

For example, Waste-Tech Services Inc. of Colorado, a subsidiary of Amoco Oil Co., signed a contract in April with the Kaw Indians of Oklahoma to United a toxic waste Incinerator and Indian in Waste-Tech has approached as many as 15 tribes, an agent for the Company has said.

For waste operators, self-governing dian lands offer a way to avoid state religious laws, which often are strict. Federal laws apply, but inspections are infrequent.

Titits an ideal, isolated place to

mens your waste. It is the Third brid. said Dr. Franklin Freeland, a herejo physician with the federal Intin Health Service in Winslow, Ariz, wine three-day gathering, Indians The Indians talked of ways to equip themselves to analyze offers and ask better questions. Tribes usually bring in lawyers for contract negotiations. But signing decisions are left to tribal councils.

Some feel at a disadvantage when waste operators come knocking.

"They have sweet tongues," said Thomas Banyacya, 80, a Hopi from Arizona.

Bonnie Bravo said that she and other Hualapai Indians in Arizona came away frustrated from meetings with a company trying to mine uranium on their reservation.

"People are not used to that kind of language structure and they give up very easily. Plus, we're not bred to be so aggressive." Bravo said.

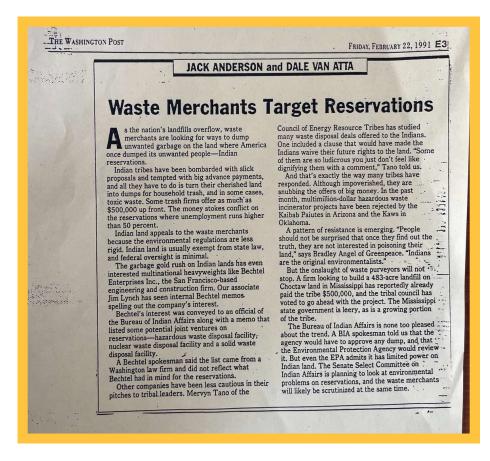
A few worried, too, that tribal leaders could be swayed by companies who hold dinners for them and send them on trips to look at other waste operations.

"It used to be whiskey. Now it's just good food," sald Joann Tall, a Sloux from Porcupine, S.D.

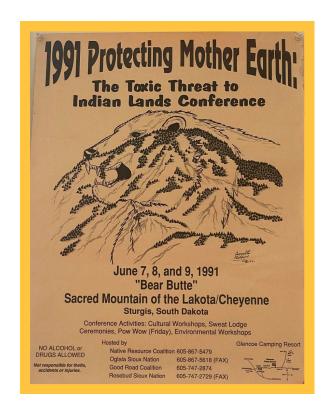
Vivienne-Caron Jake, a Palute from northern Arizona, complained that many in her tribe were unconcerned about an incinerator proposal from Waste-Tech.

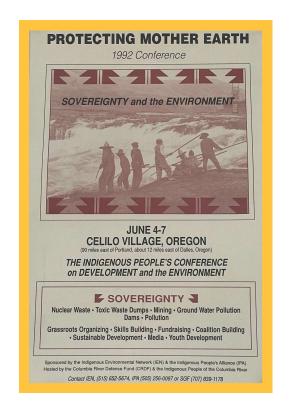
"I talked to one Indian the other day who told me that all he wanted was a six-pack, his television and a cold room. He wanted to be left alone," Jake said. (& here are our warriors?"

1991 Washington Post Article



Posters





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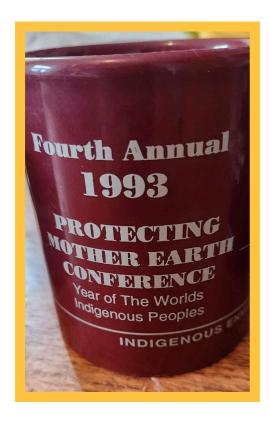


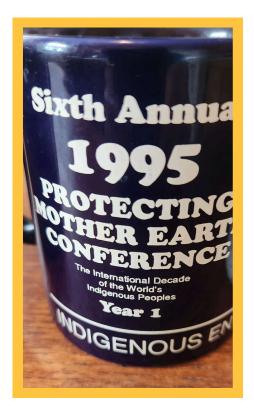




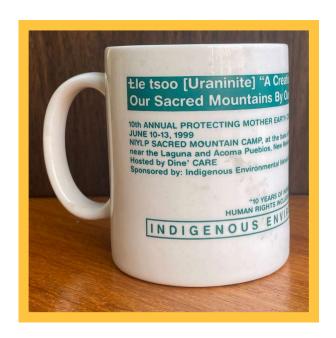
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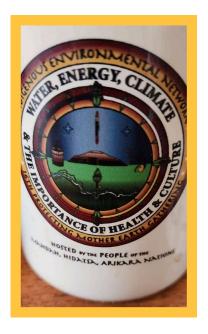




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In 1989, the grassroots Dine/Navajo community group Citizens Against Ruining our Environment (CARE) defeated a hazardous waste incinerator proposed for their small community in Dilkon on the Navajo Nation (Arizona). At the same time, many dozens of Native Nations were being approached by companies attempting to locate hazardous waste and garbage landfills and incinerators on tribal lands. At the CARE victory celebration in Dilkon, the people decided to host a grassroots conference to bring together Indigenous people from across the country facing similar threats.

The first "Protecting Mother Earth, Toxic Threats to Indian Lands" conference was held in June 1990 in Dilkon, with 200 people from 25 tribes attending. The participants decided that an Indigenous Environmental Network should be formed, and this was formalized at the 2nd Protecting Mother Earth Conference held in 1991 at Bear Butte in South Dakota, sacred land of the Lakota and Cheyenne peoples who were also fighting proposals for large commercial landfills. 500 people attended the conference at Bear Butte, and formed the Indigenous Environmental Network.

Images from the Early Protecting Mother Earth Conferences





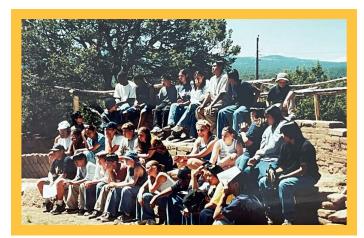


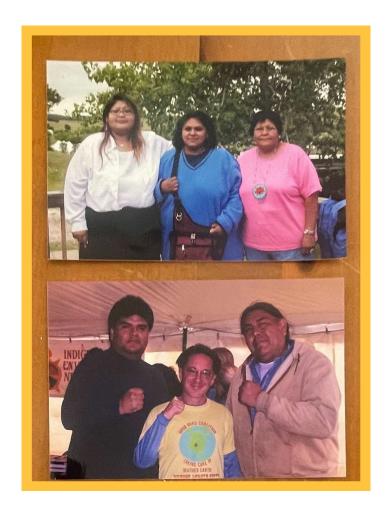


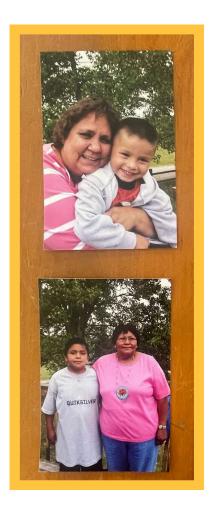


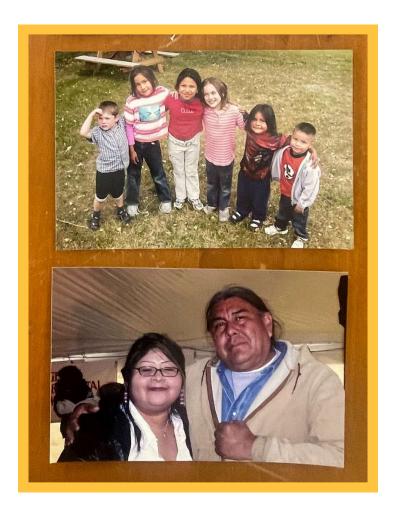












1991: Toxic Threat to Indian Lands By Bradley Angel

https://www.ejnet.org/ej/toxicthreattoindianlands.pdf

