

RITA ASGEIRSSON

20+ years serving Alaskan and Washington Tribal communities through Tribal consultation and negotiation of intergovernmental agreements, developing and implementing strategic plans, drafting policies and initiatives that support Tribal and state priorities, researching and developing proposals for major infrastructure projects, teaching Tribal law, policy and environmental courses, facilitating an Indigenous studies symposium, and developing relationships with partners for educational, cultural, and environmental projects.

EXPERIENCE

- **Key advisor** for executive leadership with transportation projects and natural resources
- **Alliance building** between Tribal, federal, state, private and public organizations utilizing Tribal Consultation under Executive Order 13175 and Section 106 of NHPA
- **Inter-governmental agreement development** for projects including two bridges along Interstate Highway 5, two dams, state and national forests, watersheds, two Ports, universities, and museums
- **Tribal College educator**, curriculum developer, and conference facilitator

SKILLS

- **Financially trained** to develop multi-million dollar budgets, forecasts, and proposals
- **Expertise** interpreting and conveying Tribal sovereignty, self-determination, Federal Indian law, US environmental laws and policies including NEPA, and government regulations for salmon, large game, and Tribal use
- **Demonstrated leadership** in exercising Tribal sovereignty in natural and cultural resource management, prioritizing Tribal values in environmental and political arenas
- **Visionary guide** partnering agencies for educational and cultural projects including the renovated Mount Saint Helens Visitor Center and USFW interpretive displays
- **Team builder** with employee capacity development and development of programs
- **Awarded proposal development** bringing in millions of dollars for Tribal government infrastructure and services including health, housing, transportation, social and educational services, and various infrastructure improvements
- **Effective communicator** with high-level government, community, corporate, private foundations, universities, and the public
- **Professional moderator** of challenging forums including Tribal sovereignty, and applying Indigenous knowledge in natural resource management, education, and business
- **Analytical and technical** when prioritizing multiple high-profile projects with numerous state and federal agencies, and other Tribal communities

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- **Strategic planning experience** with assessing strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats, developing business opportunities, locating financial resources, combining matched finances, executing plans for land and cultural management

PUBLIC AND COMMUNITY SERVICE

- **Community development** supporting Tribal, federal and regional transportation projects, legislative initiatives, small businesses, and creation of new job opportunities
- **Regional development** leading transportation projects that favor Tribal input, restoration of salmon habitat and prairies, and protection of sacred sites
- **Successful negotiation of Tribal/Federal/State contracts** – with the National Forest Service, National Park Service, USFW, State Fish and Wildlife, State Natural Resources, FTA, FHWA, and two state DOTs that reflect Tribal access, protection, priority
- **Traditional Ecological Knowledge and Tribal History** incorporated into contracts, reports, two local museums, two National Parks, one USFW refuge, one state park
- **Awarded millions of dollars in grants** for health, law & justice, transportation, social services, education, and culture
- **Managed a Tribal Historic Preservation Office (THPO)** including a THPO Officer, Archaeologist, Cultural Resource Specialist, and Advisory Review Board
- **Repatriation of Ancestors and Artifacts** from federal agency and universities
- **Indigenous Studies Symposium** coordinator for Tribal discourse on law, education, disenrollment, application of TEK and best Tribal practices in environmental management
- **Tribal College Faculty** educator in topics of Biology (BIO), Philosophy (PHIL), Political Science (POLS), Native Environmental Science (NESC), and Law (categorized under NESC).
 - BIOL 104 Biology and Natural History of Place
 - PHIL 140 Philosophies of the Natural World
 - POLS 118 Rights of Indians and Tribes
 - POLS 225 History of Federal Indian Policy
 - POLS 240 Indian Policy and Tribal Self-Governance
 - POLS 319 Native American Fishing Rights
 - NESC 310 Native Science
 - NESC 315 Traditional Ecological Knowledge
 - NESC 393A/B/C NESC SEMINAR III (Thesis exploration 1, 2, 3)
 - NESC 410 Native Environmental Ethics
 - NESC 425 Native Environmental Law (Royster & Blumm)
 - NESC 445 Vine Deloria, Jr. Native Science Seminar
 - NESC 493A/B/C NESC SEMINAR IV (Thesis preparation 1, 2, 3)
 - NESC 499A/B NESC Capstone Project (Thesis development 1, 2)

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BACKGROUND

Cultural Resources Director	Cowlitz Indian Tribe	2021 – 2023
Grant Writer/Planner	Lower Elwha Klallam Tribe	2019 – 2020
Tribal Law & Policy Professor	Northwest Indian College	2015 – 2018
Grant Writer	Nooksack Indian Tribe	2014 – 2015
Adjunct Professor	Northwest Indian College	2012 – 2014
Alfred P. Sloan Fellow	American Indian College Fund	2012 – 2014
Mellon Fellow Assistant	American Indian College Fund	2011 – 2012
Tribal Climate Change Lead	Bureau of Land Management	2010
Sales & Marketing	Fishermen's Finest, Inc.	1998 – 2003

EDUCATION

Geography, MS (ABD)	Western Washington University	2012 – 2015
Native Environmental Science, BS	Northwest Indian College	2010 – 2012
Accounting Clerk Certificate	Alaska Vocational Technical Center	1997 – 1998

REFERENCES

David E. Wilkins, PhD	Professor	University of Richmond	(612) 355-0486
Dan Meyer	Ret. Council	Cowlitz Indian Tribe	(360) 901-8328
Steve Robideau	Council Member	Lower Elwha Klallam Tribe	(360) 912-1502