

Use of HIA in Alaska Native and American Indian Communities

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A collaboration between Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and The Pew Charitable Trusts.

Status of U.S. tribes as independent governments

- 565 tribes “recognized” by U.S. government
- In general, federal recognition includes:
 - right to “government to government consultation”
 - Treatment as state in some matters
 - Self determination: right to assume authority for administering federal programs, criminal justice, education, health and social services.
 - Jurisdiction over “Indian country” – reservations.

Status of Alaska Native tribes

A special case

- 229 federally recognized tribes in Alaska
- All the same rights as in other states, EXCEPT: Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (1971).
- ANSCA extinguished native land claims by:
 - Creating 12 regional “native corporations” and >200 village corporations
 - Transferring 6 million acres and \$960 million to the native corporations and individual registered Tribal members

Status of Alaska Native tribes

ANCSA significance?

- Tribal governments in Alaska do not have jurisdiction over land—Native corporations do. (Supreme court ruled that Tribal land is not “Indian Country” in Alaska)
- Tribal governments are generally under-funded
- Tribal members/native corporation shareholders in regions with active natural resource extraction sometimes benefit from revenues, employment, and corporate dividends.
- Some of the largest companies in Alaska are Alaska Native corporations—many engaged in resource extractions

HIA use by indigenous people in U.S.

- Alaska native tribes led the first use of HIA in the federal EIA process
- Participation in EIA via written comments on an EIA, G-to-G consultation, “cooperating agency” status.
- Outside Alaska, limited pick up to date—we are aware of only 1-2 projects in progress.

www.healthimpactproject.org/hia/us for a map of HIAs in Alaska, many of which were conducted by or with Alaska Natives

