



Council of Allied Societies

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July/August 2021 News and Notes:

NAGPRA update 1

The SAA learned that the U.S. Secretary of the Interior has released a draft of proposed changes to the regulations that support the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA) and initiated discussions with tribal leaders and Native Hawaiian community leaders (<https://www.nps.gov/subjects/nagpra/regulations.htm>). In line with the SAA's new statement concerning the treatment of human remains, the SAA Board feels that this is the time for formal government-to-government discussions between the U.S. government and tribal and Native Hawaiian community leaders. The board is working on a process for SAA comment for the public comment period. At its August meetings, the National NAGPRA Review Committee is allotting time for public comment, (<https://www.nps.gov/orgs/1335/events.htm>). The committee will meet on August 19, 2021. We encourage you to learn about the process and possible changes.

NAGPRA update 2

The SAA Board is pleased to announce publication of a [report](#) by the Committee on Native American Relations and the Committee on Repatriation describing the steps they used to create the recommended language for the updated [Statement Concerning the Treatment of Human Remains](#). The board hopes publication of the report is a helpful roadmap and exemplar of the collaborative consultations within our Society and with other important constituents.

To further this effort, the committees are developing educational materials about how to consult, collaborate, and obtain consent with descendant communities, and the SAA President is working on a formal notification to groups who gave us invaluable advice, including the National Association of Tribal Historic Preservation Officers and other relevant organizations.

July/August 2021 Government and International Government Affairs Update

From Deborah L. Nichols, Ph.D., RPA, SAA President

On July 28, after weeks of drama and several make-or-break moments, the bipartisan group of senators reached an agreement on an infrastructure spending package. The legislation, titled the Bipartisan Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, would authorize \$550 billion in new spending. That includes \$284 billion for transportation infrastructure, with another \$264 billion for other infrastructure needs including the power grid, water systems, and broadband installation. Later that evening, the Senate agreed to limit debate on the measure and proceed to a final vote, likely sometime during this week.

As of this writing, the Government Affairs Committee is examining the text of the bill in order to determine if any of the provisions would pose a threat to the carrying out of effective Section 106 reviews in federally-sponsored undertakings. Complicating matters is the desire of the Democratic leadership in both houses of Congress to pass the President's other legislative priority, the \$3.5 trillion "human infrastructure" package, at the same time as the "hard infrastructure" measure. It is not clear at this time, however, if the votes are there to enact both bills.

We will keep a sharp eye on the progress of this crucial and very fluid issue as it progresses. As I mentioned last month, infrastructure development done properly is crucial to the future of the nation and its cultural heritage, and we will continue to work to ensure that Section 106 is kept intact. Again, it is your membership that makes this possible. Thank you for being a part of the SAA!

From David Lindsay, Manager, SAA Government Affairs

On July 29, the House passed an omnibus appropriations package (H.R. 4502) that included the Interior-Environment Appropriations bill for FY2022. The Interior measure includes \$43.4 billion an increase of \$7.3 billion above the previous year. The bill contains the following amounts for leading cultural resources management accounts:

\$57.6 million for State Historic Preservation Offices (\$2 million over FY21)

\$23 million for Tribal Historic Preservation Offices (\$8 million over FY21)

\$30 million for Save America's Treasures grants (\$5 million over FY21)

\$21.9 million for BLM cultural resources (\$1.9 million over FY21)

\$66.5 million for BLM national landscapes conservation system (\$20.67 million over FY21)

\$34.4 million for NPS cultural resources (\$2.47 million over FY21)

\$2.4 million for NPS NAGPRA grants (\$500,000 over FY21)

The Senate's version of the FY22 appropriations bill is expected soon, but it likely that there will have to be a consolidated appropriations package enacted in September to avoid a shutdown. On another matter that SAA has worked on for several years, on June 4 Secretary of the Interior Deb Haaland submitted her report and recommendation on the future of the Bears Ears and Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monuments. According to later news reports, the document, which has not yet been made public by the White House, reportedly calls for the restoration of the Monuments to their original boundaries, prior to their reduction by the

Trump administration. This is a goal that SAA and many other preservation groups, tribes, and concerned individuals have pursued since 2018.

CoAS at the Pecos Conference

CoAS had good response to our vendor booth at the Pecos Conference in Mancos earlier this month - more details to follow!

CoAS Facebook Group is growing!

Invite all of your members and chapters to join our Facebook group. It is a great place to post your upcoming Society activities and events. <https://www.facebook.com/groups/saacoas>

New CoAS/SAA Mailing Address

CoAS has a new mailing address:

SAA/Council of Allied Societies

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