



**AIANTA**  
American Indian Alaska Native  
Tourism Association

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## **American Indian Alaska Native Tourism Association and National Tribal Geographic Information Support Center Announce Memorandum of Understanding for Education and Promotion of Tribal Geo-Tourism**

*Unprecedented partnership Announced at Fourth Annual National Tribal GIS Conference*

**Albuquerque, New Mexico (November 8, 2013)** – This week, the American Indian Alaska Native Tourism Association (AIANTA) announced its Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the National Tribal Geographic Information Support Center (NTGISC) for the education and promotion of tribal geo-tourism.

“The MOU for Education and Promotion of Tribal Geo-Tourism was set in place to establish a general framework for cooperation between American Indian, Alaska Native and Native Hawaiian tourism, travel and recreational interests, represented by AIANTA; and the application of geographic information systems to Indian Country, represented by the NTGISC,” said Garet Couch, NTGISC President.

AIANTA Executive Director Camille Ferguson and Couch teamed up to unveil the MOU at the 2013 National Tribal GIS Conference held at the Southwestern Indian Polytechnic Institute (SIPI) in AIANTA’s home base of Albuquerque, November 4 – 8

“This is an exceptional advancement for both Indian Country tourism and the NTGISC,” said Camille Ferguson, AIANTA Executive Director. “Both of our organizations consider tribal tourism, recreation and heritage resources to be economic and cultural assets that will increase value with additional coordination and cooperation between AIANTA and NTGISC in the development, conservation, management and promotion of tribal tourism.”

An advisory committee was established for the development of a long-range plan using spatial data for travel and tourism purposes in Indian Country. Elected co-chairs for the advisory committee are Kristin Lamoureux, PhD and Michell Carter. Dr. Lamoureux is the director of the International Institute of Tourism Studies (IITS) and a research professor of business and tourism studies in the School of Business at the George Washington University, an AIANTA partner.



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Michell Carter, GISP has been working as a GIS Professional 1985. She currently serves on the Board of Directors for NTGISC and is the GIS Manager for the Seminole Tribe of Florida.

The annual National Tribal GIS Conference explores the obstacles to coordinating legislation, budgets and other policy challenges, and shares knowledge on good practices, innovative technologies and new initiatives, such as this MOU.



*AIANTA Executive Director Camille Ferguson and NTGISC President Garet Couch team up for an unveiling presentation of the MOU at the 2013 National Tribal GIS Conference in Albuquerque.*

## **About AIANTA:**

The American Indian Alaska Native Tourism Association (AIANTA) is a 501(c)(3) national nonprofit association of American Indian tribes, tribal tourism, cultural and private sector representatives, representatives from the tourism industry, Federal, State and local governments, colleges and universities, and friends that was incorporated in 2002 to advance Indian Country tourism. The association is made up of representatives from six regions: Alaska, Eastern, Midwest, Pacific, Plains and the Southwest. AIANTA's mission is to define, introduce, grow and sustain American Indian, Alaska Native and Native Hawaiian tourism that honors and preserves tribal traditions and values.

The purpose of the American Indian Alaska Native Tourism Association is to provide our constituents with the voice and tools needed to advance tourism while helping tribes, tribal organizations and tribal members create infrastructure and capacity through technical assistance, training and educational resources. AIANTA serves as the liaison among Indian Country, governmental, educational and private entities for the development, growth, and sustenance of Indian Country tourism. By developing and implementing programs and facilitating economic development opportunities, the American Indian Alaska Native Tourism Association helps tribes build for their future while sustaining and strengthening their cultural legacy.

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