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American Indian Culture and Research Journal

Title

Trust in the Land: New Directions in Tribal Conservation. By Beth Rose Middleton.

Permalink

<https://escholarship.org/uc/item/9dw342zn>

Journal

American Indian Culture and Research Journal , 37(3)

ISSN

0161-6463

Author

Krakoff, Sarah

Publication Date

2013-06-01

DOI

10.17953

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Commissioners and agents heard the story as a complaint about the color of the wagons. They, like Meeker, did not understand that they were in Ute country; furthermore, whatever was given to Indians was a result of treaty obligations, not United States government generosity. I also believe that Nacaaget employed traditional Ute narrative motifs to make the point that Meeker could not be trusted; these motifs are at the foundation of the core Native value of honesty.

As a resident of Greeley, Colorado, and a cultural anthropologist who is familiar with and profoundly interested in the incidents before and after the Meeker “massacre,” overall I found Silbernagel’s treatment of the event refreshing. When I read a book that I learn something from, and am provoked to rethink old questions, I am satisfied. As a seamstress, I just want to comprehend how Josie fashioned an elegantly tailored wool suit from worn Indian blankets while on the run with her Ute captors.

Sally McBeth

University of Northern Colorado

Trust in the Land: New Directions in Tribal Conservation. By Beth Rose Middleton. Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2011. 352 pages. \$35.00 paper.

It is a tragic coincidence that, just as American Indian nations are asserting their long-suppressed rights to self-determination over their lands and resources, they are required to confront evolving threats to their homelands due to climate change. Given the urgent nature of today’s ecological situation, a book devoted to analyzing how legal conservation tools can be used to advance tribal political, economic, cultural, and ecological goals is very timely indeed.

Beth Rose Middleton’s *Trust in the Land* is, on one hand, a very practical volume describing how certain legal and institutional arrangements can be used to consolidate the tribal land base, protect tribal natural resources, and obtain access to and restore sites that are not located on tribal lands. On the other, Middleton’s historical and theoretical framing of the book, as well as her contextual remarks and analysis throughout, make it more than just a how-to manual for tribal conservation specialists and their non-Native allies. Middleton approaches her subject—the use of conservation easements and the role of land trusts in various contexts throughout Indian country—through the lens of environmental justice, and in particular environmental justice for Native people. Middleton therefore weaves an understanding of tribal peoples’ distinctive historical and cultural claims and relationships to their lands into

her analysis of how contemporary legal tools can be brought to bear to realize justice in each context.

The heart of Middleton's book constitutes a series of case studies of tribes, tribal land trusts, nontribal land trusts, as well as those state, local, and federal agencies that use conservation easements and analogous resource restoration tools to advance the goals of tribal land and resource control, restoration, management, and/or access. Before those sections, however, Middleton includes two very important overview chapters. First, in chapter 2, she summarizes the legal and political context in which private land conservation tools have become ascendant, and provides a succinct description of what conservation easements are, how they work, and the role of land trusts in holding and managing them. A conservation easement is "an agreement between a landowner and another party restricting or prohibiting development of a parcel for a defined length of time" (10). As Middleton notes, conservation easements are relatively new sticks in the property rights bundle that allow both property and easement holders to realize value by choosing *not* to develop land, as opposed to the typical scenario where an easement or partial ownership of property is designed to facilitate use, development, or extraction.

Land trusts, as Middleton also explains, are nonprofit entities whose missions are dedicated to conserving land, or at least certain values about how land is managed, that use conservation easements, ownership, and other mechanisms and transactions to further their purposes. Middleton appropriately describes some of the concerns about conservation easements, which mostly center on their long-term enforceability. She then notes that tribes may therefore be even more attractive holders of easements because, unlike a 501(c)(3) nonprofit entity, tribes are governments that have already endured for centuries and intend to do so for many more. Nonetheless, Middleton is careful to point out that tribes, like other easement or property owners, should be aware of the legal questions that remain for these relatively recent and therefore untested property arrangements.

Middleton then describes the newest permutation of such easements, which have particular relevance in the tribal context. These are cultural conservation easements. They are similar to ordinary conservation easements in that they allow a nonowner to purchase a non-possessory interest in the land, but instead of proscribing development or use, they typically allow the holder to access property either to engage in traditional cultural uses or to manage resources or sites that have cultural, historical, or spiritual significance. As Middleton notes, this form of easement opens a window within mainstream property law to recognize ancient and yet ever-evolving indigenous approaches to land management. The preservation paradigm—of setting lands aside from humans—was never a good fit for tribes' historical relationship with their

lands or their present realities. To the contrary, as Middleton emphasizes in chapter 3, that paradigm has often erased the fact of Native existence. National parks were created at the expense of American Indian presence and claims. Forest reserves protected trees from non-Indians, but banned tribes from centuries-old practices of migration and balanced use. Middleton references the preservation movement's troubled history in this chapter as well as throughout the book in ways that add depth to her pragmatic descriptions about how to use contemporary, market-based property law tools, such as cultural conservation easements, to reverse these prior injustices.

Also in chapter 3, Middleton outlines the basic theoretical arguments about environmental justice for tribes. It is difficult to tell the complicated, rich, and devastating story of settler colonialism's effects on Native peoples in a few brief pages. But Middleton adverts to enough of it to segue into what environmental justice, both procedural and substantive, should mean for American Indians today. The upshot is that tribes should, to the extent possible, regain their land base, or short of that, the ability to access and manage at least crucial parts of it as they desire.

Middleton's original case studies of different tribal land conservation arrangements comprise the remainder of the book. She groups the case studies by the type of institution or legal mechanism. In one section she describes Native American land conservancies. On the surface these are entities similar to other land trusts or conservancies, but they employ board membership rules, missions, bylaws, and practices that reflect the indigenous vision behind them. In another section, Middleton reviews a diverse array of arrangements between tribes or tribal groups and non-Native land trusts. In the last and shortest section, Middleton describes how tribes have been able to take advantage of funding and support from the Natural Resource Conservation Service, a federal agency within the Department of Agriculture that provides funding and technical support to districts organized under state or tribal law. Regardless of the legal or institutional arrangement, themes that are consistent throughout these case studies include the central role of relationships of trust between tribal participants and non-Indian conservationists or government officials; the importance of patience, creativity, and a willingness to listen; the centrality of legal expertise across a range of areas, including American Indian law, local government law, and environmental law, among others; and core respect for tribal ecological knowledge and ways of seeing and relating to land.

Anyone interested in tribal land conservation, or for that matter land conservation, management, and protection of any kind, will learn a great deal from these stories. Their geographic and cultural variety paint a granular picture of the many different tools, techniques, and structures that may be put to use in each context. Land conservation is not a one-size-fits-all endeavor,

and Middleton's impressionistic tour of Native efforts across the country helps to cement that idea. Middleton includes a map at the beginning of the book that shows the location of each case study, and there are a handful of photos throughout the case studies portion of the book. My one minor criticism is that it would have been very helpful to have more detailed and local maps for each location. For a book that so richly captures the significance of place to Native people in other respects, this was a small but noticeable gap.

Middleton's book will be an important source and guide for Native people interested in restoring their land and resources, for non-Native lands trusts desirous of working with tribes, and for anyone wondering what processes and relationships might help us to tend our landscapes in times of daunting environmental change. Middleton's adept practical and factual descriptions serve as a helpful instruction manual, and her deep historical and theoretical framing remind us that instructions alone will not do. *Trust in the Land* gives a sense that achieving environmental justice for American Indian people is possible through the hard and detailed work of restoring relationships among peoples, as well as between people and the land, waters, and nonhuman animals, on which we all depend.

Sarah Krakoff
University of Colorado Law School