



Long-Term Strategic Plan

United South and Eastern Tribes, Inc. (USET)

*An IRS designated 501(c)3 not-for-profit corporation

USET Sovereignty Protection Fund (USET SPF)

*An IRS designated 501(c)4 not-for-profit corporation

FY 2017 – 2021
FINAL

Preamble

Improving the quality of life throughout Indian Country and protecting the sovereignty of Tribal Nations have been central goals for United South and Eastern Tribes, Inc. (USET). Since its incorporation, USET's membership has grown to 26 Tribal Nations. It has assisted member Tribal Nations build capacity, influenced policy and legislation that has made a positive impact on Indian Country, and provided a platform for Tribal Nations to unify to uphold, protect, and advance sovereignty.

This document outlines the 5-year strategic direction for USET and USET Sovereignty Protection Fund (USET SPF), an affiliate 501c4 organization dedicated to advocating on behalf of member Tribal Nations and issues related to Indian Country. An overarching purpose and strategic goal are presented to anchor the 5-year strategic plan and an evaluation process that defines key performance indicators is outlined. The appendix provides the organization history, mission, Statement of Unity, and organization goals that are the foundation of the organization and serve as the guiding principles for the strategic planning process.

The USET and USET Sovereignty Protection Fund (USET SPF) 2017-2021 long-term strategic plan (LTSP) represents the first 5-year strategic planning process for the organizations. The joint planning effort between the two organizations recognizes the affiliate relationship USET SPF has to USET. Given this relationship, it is critical that strategic planning be coordinated to ensure impact is achieved.

“Vision without action is merely a dream. Action without vision just passes the time. Vision with action can change the world.”

Joel A. Barker

USET is a regional inter-tribal organization that has further developed a respected national voice to guide and influence programs, policy, legislation, and litigation that make a positive impact on Indian Country. Founded on the purpose of strength in unity, today USET's role as a convener, facilitator, educator, and advocate is increasingly vital to upholding, protecting and advancing the inherent sovereign authorities and rights of its member Tribal Nations. The opportunities to build and shape economies, to strengthen social and cultural bonds, create greater access to healthcare, and to protect natural resources, coupled with the complexity of issues, uncertain political climate, and the social and economic distress experienced across Indian Country requires not only unity, but also a sound strategic approach.

USET SPF, an affiliate of USET and incorporated as a 501c4 organization, is dedicated to advancing policy and legislative affairs that affects Indian Country. To provide USET member Tribal Nations a stronger voice in upholding, protecting, and advancing sovereign authorities and rights, a 501c4 affiliate organization was established.

The USET Board of Directors passed its initial formal organization strategic plan in FY12, a one-year strategy to introduce a planning process to the organization, which was followed by an additional one-year plan in FY13 and a three-year strategic plan for FY14 to FY16. As the needs of the corporations' membership have evolved and matured, it was of absolute necessity that the corporations evolve and mature in a similar manner to ensure that the level of services and support generated "value add". To accomplish this evolution and maturation with vision and intent, a formal strategic planning process was necessary and implemented.

Acknowledgement

The USET and USET SPF long-term strategic plan engaged board members, staff, and other key stakeholders to ensure the planning process was comprehensive, inclusive, and aligned with the interests of member Tribal Nations. Without the support and guidance of the following this plan would not be possible.

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USET Senior Leadership

USET Staff

USET Executive Committee

USET Board of Directors

USET Committee Members

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Approach

For nearly 50 years USET, a 501c3 inter-tribal organization, has championed the interests of federally recognized Tribal Nations in the south and eastern United States. With 26 member Tribal Nations, the organization has developed a series of core competencies that include Tribal Health Program Support (THPS), Office of Environmental Resource Management (OERM), and Economic Development (ED) to assist Tribes with building capacity. In 2014, the USET Sovereignty Protection Fund (USET SPF) was created; a 501c4 organization dedicated to advancing public policy and influencing legislative affairs via education and awareness.

The two organizations - USET and USET Sovereignty Protection Fund - are independent legal entities with separate organizational structures. At the same time, each organization complements the other and it is important that there is alignment of strategic goals and objectives. The development of this long-term strategic plan considers both organizations in their respective context, mission and purpose, and desired outcomes and impacts for the next five years.

This LTSP emerged from a series of conversations with the board of directors, committee leadership, and staff of both organizations. A facilitated workshop was designed early in the process, that included representatives from various stakeholder interests, to shape the direction of the plan, which was followed by organization analysis and an in depth look at USET's core competencies and the USET Sovereignty Protection Fund's vision.

The strategic direction for 2017 to 2021 for USET, the 501c3 organization, and the USET SPF, the 501c4 organization are outlined within. A guiding principle, as well as the overarching purpose and goal for each organization are offered as a foundation to inform the planning process. This LTSP for programs and services, as well as organization development, is presented for each entity.

USET Overarching Purpose and Strategic Goal

Strength in unity serves as a core guiding principle for the organization and its actions. It presents a value proposition that offers strategic advantage to its Tribal Nations. This advantage manifests in direct service provision, capacity building through training and professional development, and organization development. As a guiding principle, strength in unity should also influence the purpose behind USET's strategic direction.

USET Overarching Purpose

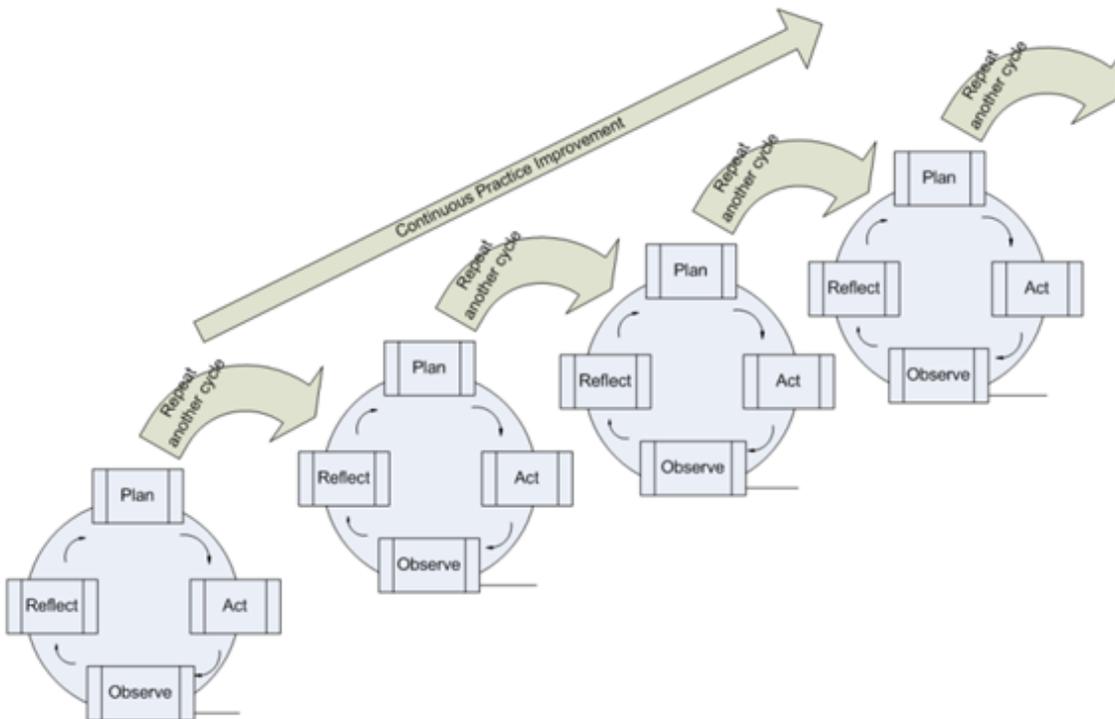
Uphold, protect, and advance Tribal sovereignty and Nation rebuilding through capacity building, organization/government development, technical assistance, advocacy, partnership, and resource development that improves the quality of life and overall wellbeing of Indian people.

USET Overarching Strategic Goal

Assert inherent Tribal Nation sovereignty by achieving recognition and parity across governments that improves the quality of life and sustains the overall wellbeing of Indian people.

USET Overarching Metrics

Evaluating the effectiveness of the strategic planning process, assessing its execution, and measuring its impact are critical to USET realizing its goal to assert Tribal sovereignty. To foster an organizational culture that embraces continuous improvement, a formal process based on a traditional action research cycle outlined below will be designed and applied to all aspects of the strategic plan. Specific metrics and key performance indicators will be defined and a process of measuring impact established.



In evaluating the strategic plan's effectiveness and measure impact on desired goals and objectives two distinct areas are defined - USET programs and services, and USET organizational infrastructure and capacity.

USET - Programs and Services

USET's strategic goal to advance Tribal sovereignty and realize self-determination for its Tribal Nations, coupled with the purpose of its programs and services are grounded in Native culture and heritage, and consider the impact to the entire community ecosystem. Culture and heritage, as well as effect on youth and future generations, provide an overarching guide to shaping and evaluating USET programs and services. To evaluate the effectiveness of the strategic plan and measure impact of the organization's programs and services actions, an evaluative process and clearly defined metrics for the following areas must be defined.

1. Overall Health and Wellness
2. Natural Resources
3. Culture and Heritage
4. Education, Training and Workforce Development
5. Youth Initiatives
6. Housing and Other Facilities²⁷⁸
7. Organization Development/Administrative Services
8. Transportation, Water, Sewer, and Other Infrastructure
9. Economic Development, Job Creation, and Capital Investment

USET - Organizational Infrastructure & Capacity

USET organizational infrastructure and capacity consider three categories for which metrics will be defined and a process of evaluation determined for: financial health, employer of choice, and organizational systems. For each of the categories, the evaluation of impact will be based on measurement in a series of sub-categories outlined below.

Financial Health - USET financial health to sustain and grow operations is measured by the following two areas:

1. *Funding Mix/Diversity*
2. *Fund Balance*

Employer of Choice - An employer's ability to attract, retain, and support professional growth of its staff is central to the organization's capacity. Three areas in which USET's organizational infrastructure and capacity will be measured are:

1. *Employee Retention*
2. *Recruiting Capacity*
3. *Wages and Benefits*

Organization Systems - To facilitate efficient and effective workflow, key organizational systems are critical to build stronger infrastructure and increase capacity. Two areas in which measurement will be conducted are:

1. *Technology*
2. *Cross-Department Collaboration*

USET Programs and Services Purpose, Strategic Goals and Objectives

The evolution of USET's programs and services has been a reflection of the organization responding to member Tribes' needs and pursuing funding opportunities. The organization now considers a strategic direction for program growth and investment that centers on Nation rebuilding. With clear purpose and intent, USET's programs can build capacity of member Tribal Nations that leads to self-determination and upholding, protecting, and advancing sovereignty.

Goal Statement:

USET will innovate new solutions to expand and enhance programs and services, which improve the quality of life in Indian Country and facilitates Nation rebuilding; uphold, protect and advance sovereignty; and fosters leadership development.

Foundational to USET's mission and purpose is capacity building through the following activities:

1. Partnership and Collaboration – Convener and facilitator that leads to strong partnerships, networks, and resource exchange
2. Program Infrastructure – Systems, processes, and technology to deliver efficient and effective programs
3. Education, Training and Technical Assistance – Scaffolding to build and sustain capacity across USET programs
4. Resource Development – Leveraging funding and partnership to secure the necessary resources to enhance program delivery
5. Advocacy and Education – Provide a unified voice to uphold, promote, and protect the sovereign interests of Tribal Nations and their citizens

Programs and Services Strategic Objectives

Three primary programs and services objectives have been defined to advance USET's five-year strategic agenda. Strategic direction will be developed for each of the following objectives.

1. *Nation Rebuilding*
2. *Uphold, Protect, and Advance Sovereignty*
3. *Leadership Development*

Objective 1:
Nation Rebuilding

Support Nation rebuilding that leads to strong Tribal governments, a healthy society, rich cultural practices, an educated populous, abundant natural resources, capital investment, and economic and social sustainability.

Actions:

1. Increase participation by 20 percent from member Tribal Nations in core USET programs and services.
2. Strengthen the healthcare delivery system by expanding access to quality care and facilitating patient education.
3. Launch a community health assessment program that utilizes THPS' strength in public health to build capacity at the individual Tribal level.
4. Develop revenue generating services or subsidiary businesses that provides value to Tribal Nations that will assist with their initiatives to build healthy economies and advance sovereignty.
5. Develop strategic partnerships and collaborations with organizations that have the ability to optimize the use of critical resources which advance Nation rebuilding and advance sovereignty.
6. Establish a Tribal energy program with internal capacity to assist member Tribal Nations analyze, design, and implement alternative energy initiatives that support Tribes' sovereignty.
7. Develop a food sovereignty program that advances healthy living, supports cultural traditions, and is cultivated for economic gain.
8. Develop capacity in community and land use planning to provide technical assistance and support in housing development, community economic development, and natural resource management.
9. Establish a climate change initiative based in cultural heritage that provides community planning and technical assistance to Tribal Nations address environmental, emergency management, and economic adjustment challenges associated with climate change.
10. Revive/Reconstitute the Tribal Emergency Mutual Aid Compact (TEMAC) to assist Tribal Nations manage natural disaster declarations, hazard mitigation, and other emergency management.
11. Establish a cultural resource program to assist Tribal Nations manage historic preservation, archeological, and repatriation issues associated with development.

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12. Utilize USET's Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) as the primary document that directs the economic development core competency. The CEDS is included in the appendix.
 13. Economic diversification program targeting Tribal leadership that encourages moving beyond traditional economic sectors by considering Tribal assets.
 14. Explore opportunities for organizational development that will established valued programs and services which promote rebuilding Tribal Nations.
 - a. Analysis of existing internal and external reports and studies to determine opportunity for developing and creating new or expanded services or programs.
 - b. Conduct new studies and surveys of Tribal Nations

Nation Rebuilding Metrics - The achieve Nation rebuilding USET should consider the following areas for strategic investment:

1. Capacity Building
2. Leadership Development
3. Workforce Development, Education and Training
4. Technical Assistance
5. Infrastructure - Physical, technological, and organizational
6. Collaboration, Partnership, and Network Development
7. Internal Controls
8. Cultural Development
9. Health, Safety, and Social Services
10. Natural Resource Management and Environmental Impacts
11. Economic Development
12. Organization Development and Administrative Services
13. Advocacy on Behalf of Member Tribes

Objective 2:

Uphold, Protect, and Advance Tribal Nation Sovereignty

Uphold, promote, and advance sovereignty that leads to recognition and parity across governments by advocating and educating Tribal Nations, their citizens, the federal government, strategic partners, and other key stakeholder; upholding the terms and conditions of existing treaties, achieving representation that gives Tribal Nations equal voice, and protecting Tribal interests through the development of strong Tribal legal code as dictated by the Constitution, Commerce Clause, Treaties, and other legally binding agreements made with Tribal Nations.

Actions:

1. Develop capacity to provide technical assistance to support sovereignty and Tribal Nation rebuilding in areas such as legal/tax codes, organization structures, and tax incentives.
2. Increase representation from USET member Tribal Nations on local, regional, and federal boards, committees, and task forces to raise awareness of critical issues facing Indian Country and influence action steps to support positive change.
3. Research and explore the feasibility of developing support systems that will enable and empower Tribal Nations to effectively exercise its authority and control of its community.

Sovereignty Metrics - Areas USET should consider in developing its strategic direction to advance sovereignty are:

1. Representation on Boards, Committees, Task Forces, etc.
2. Tribal Law
3. Government Affairs/Relations
4. Advocacy and Education
5. Research and development of support services

Objective 3:
Leadership Development

Develop strong, competent, and passionate leaders, especially generational leadership, who represent Tribal Nations' interests as board members, Tribally selected officials, and committee chairpersons, as well as leaders in organizations and communities, to deliver a strong voice and ensures the health, wellbeing, and self-determination of future generations.

Actions:

1. Development of a leadership program for Tribal leaders in the basics of governance, community economic development, financial management, and sovereignty.
2. Establish a multi-tiered leadership development initiative that builds capacity at the Tribal level, within USET's committee and board, and to serve on critical external committees, boards, and task forces. The initiative increased engagement, strengthens Tribal sovereignty, and supports sound succession.
3. Foster leadership entrepreneurial development amongst the youth within our Tribal membership and provide the technical assistance, mentorship and support to bring innovative business concepts to reality.

Leadership Development Metrics - Leadership development includes the following areas:

1. Succession Planning
2. Leadership Development
3. Youth Development

USET Organizational Infrastructure and Capacity

Organizational health and viability are essential for USET to practice its mission and achieve significant impact towards its goals of Tribal sovereignty. To maintain ongoing organizational development USET must dedicate strategic resources to administrative functions that support its program and policy agendas.

Goal Statement:

Establish a high functioning, efficient, and nimble organization that has the necessary resources and capability to carry out its mission and achieve the vision of its organizational strategy, which addresses the emerging needs of its member Tribal Nations and strategic alliance partnerships.

To advance organization development the following areas need to be considered:

1. Funding Diversity – Public, private foundations, individual donors, earning income, and capital investment to provide USET the stability necessary to achieve impact
2. Organization Infrastructure and Program Support – Necessary infrastructure and staffing levels to achieve success
3. Board Development and Capacity Building – Orientation, engagement, commitment, and alignment of mission to ensure the organization reaches its full potential
4. Staff Capacity Building, Education, and Training – Investment in professional development allows staff to grow with the organization and helps USET be the employer of choice in Indian Country
5. Committee Leadership – Recruitment, orientation, and engagement of committee leadership to further strengthen and integrate the committees' role
6. Succession Planning and Leadership Development – Strategically plan for staff transitions
7. Public Affairs and External Relations – Outreach and engagement with external stakeholders and the broader public
8. Research, Development, and Special Initiatives – Investment in special initiatives to ensure innovation and that USET is on the leading edge of trends impacting Indian Country

Objective 1:**Organization Development**

Develop the most effective and impactful inter-tribal organization throughout Indian Country by securing diverse financial resources, attracting the highest quality talent, establishing organization systems to support program growth and efficiency, and building networks of partners with resources to achieve USET's goals and objectives.

Actions:

1. Establish a board development program that provides USET board members with the proper training to serve on nonprofit boards of directors, reinforcing the importance of their fiduciary responsibilities to the organization, the care that is necessary to advance the organization's goals, and the loyalty to USET and USET SPF's mission and purpose.
2. Identify key positions within the organization for succession and develop a plan to ensure continued capacity and leadership.
3. Establish a strategic fund development strategy that incorporates the breadth of fundraising tactics and cultivates support from private foundations, corporations, and individuals.
4. Establish a communications strategy that conveys to member Tribal Nations, Tribal citizens, funders, and other key stakeholders the work and accomplishment of the organization.
5. Develop the necessary technology infrastructure to support distance learning and telehealth, and offer the necessary training at the Tribal level to expand access to USET programs and services.
6. Increase innovation in programs, services, and organization development by formalizing a research and development process that considers opportunities for cross-departmental integration.
7. Strengthen Tribal Nation engagement across all of USET's committees through recruitment, orientation, leadership development, and relevant offerings.

Organization Metrics - The following are factors that influence organization development:

1. Financial Diversity
2. Board Development and Capacity Building
3. Strategic Alliance and Partner Development
4. Leadership Development and Succession Planning
5. Committee Development and Engagement
6. Staff Capacity and Expertise
7. Infrastructure and Support
8. Communications and Outreach
9. Research, Development, and Special Initiatives

Objective 2:**Enterprise and Subsidiary Development**

To achieve financial diversity, the opportunity exists for USET to utilize existing organization structures (Calumet), as well as create new entities (CDFI and THSG), that generate earned income and attract private investment.

Actions:

1. Develop a research and development process to explore new ventures and evaluate the viability of organization investment in new enterprise.
2. Establish the necessary organization systems to manage the creation, sustainability, and integration of new enterprise.

Organization Metrics - The following are consideration when measuring the impact on USET

1. Number of new entities
2. Cross-fertilization of programs and services
3. Activity and utilization

USET Sovereignty Protection Fund 501c4

The USET Sovereignty Protection Fund (SPF)¹ was founded in 2014 as an affiliate organization to USET. As USET, the 501c3 organization expanded its reach and engaged in a broader scope of work, constraints in certain activities associated with advocacy surfaced. While the IRS allows limited advocacy that is indirectly related to a 501c3 organization's mission, it became increasingly important that USET member Tribal Nations have the ability to directly advocate on behalf of Tribal Nations' interest and established a 501c4 affiliate. USET SPF, is charged with building a leading advocacy organization with a strong foundation that gives voice to and advances a comprehensive policy and legislative affairs agenda reflecting the interests of USET Tribal Nations, their citizens, and Indian Country.

Overarching Purpose

The overarching purpose of the USET SPF is to uphold, protect, and advance the inherent sovereign authorities and rights of USET SPF member Tribal Nations through assertive advocacy and diplomacy. Although a 501c4 organization can actively engage in electoral activities, USET SPF will not engage in influencing the election process. In the future if the board chooses to pursue electoral action a separate organization will be established and political action committee formed to serve that purpose.

¹ The USET SPF is USET's 501 c4 sister organization.

Organization Infrastructure and Capacity

The USET SPF must continue to become a strong, influential, and leading organization to achieve the goals and objectives outlined below. Fundamental to effectively serving the interests of USET SPF member Tribal Nations, the following are a series of key themes that require focus and strategic direction.

Organization Infrastructure:

1. Staff
2. Organization Policies and Procedures
3. Communications
4. External Relations
5. Administrative Support
6. Legal and Policy Capacity
7. Technology

1. Plan to elevate USET's unique message and priorities

Policy Agenda Setting Process

2. Board Development

3. Financial Resource Development

4. Strategic Partnerships

5. Representation and Advocacy - Participation in and representation on various boards, committees, and task forces

USET SPF Strategic Goals and Objectives

The USET SPF strategic goals and objectives focus on carving out a distinct place for the litigation and policy and legislative affairs priorities of USET SPF member Tribal Nations in the national conversation.

Goal Statement:

Become a leading advocacy organization in Indian Country that upholds, protects, and advances, and restores sovereignty for USET SPF member Tribal Nations, their citizens, and Indian Country.

Programmatic Strategic Objectives:

Two strategic objectives associated have been outlined below to advance the strategic direction of USET SPF programs. As a new organization it is critical that there is strategic integration between USET and USET SPF.

1. Comprehensive Policy and Legislative Affairs Agenda
2. Strategic Participation in Litigation

Objective 1:

Comprehensive Policy and Legislative Affairs Agenda

Develop a comprehensive policy and legislative affairs agenda reflective of USET SPF member Tribal Nation interests and needs, and responsive to new developments that impact Indian Country at the federal level.

Actions:

1. Design a method of vetting and prioritizing legislation and policy initiatives that make an impact Indian Country.
2. Formalize a rapid response procedure for unanticipated legislation and policy developments that mobilizes USET Tribal Nations.
3. Identify opportunities to assert and amplify USET SPF priorities.
4. Broaden support beyond Indian Country for the USET SPF policy and legislative affairs agenda.
5. Leverage Tribal and non-Tribal strategic alliances for shared policy and legislative affairs impact.
6. Strengthen organization capacity in issues of the environment, natural resources, and economic development.

Objective 2:
Strategic Participation in Litigation

Monitor and determine response to court cases with implications for USET member Tribal Nations and all of Indian Country.

Actions:

1. Join and/or initiate amicus briefs containing legal arguments that undergird the priorities and philosophy of USET member Tribal Nations.
2. Increase advocacy efforts to protect foundational Indian law from increasing attacks.
3. Strengthen Tribal law authority through advocacy, education and influence at the Tribal, regional and federal levels.

USET SPF Organizational Infrastructure and Capacity

Goal Statement:

Build a vibrant organization that leads the policy and legislative agenda in Indian Country with the necessary capacity, resources, and influence to impact decisions at the federal level in favor of USET SPF Tribal Nations.

Objective:

Organization Development

Serve the needs of USET SPF member Tribal Nations, exercise a strong voice in Indian Country, and ensure meaningful impact organization infrastructure and capacity.

Actions

1. Build policy and communications capacity across all issue areas associated with USET, its member Tribal Nations and across Indian Country.
2. Establish strong board leadership through active recruitment, comprehensive orientation, and continued education to ensure impact is achieved.
3. Establish a fund development strategy to increase the level of unrestricted funding to fully implement a robust policy and legislative agenda.
4. Identify gaps in staff capacity and develop a hiring plan to engage additional issue-specific, legal, and support staff to meet the vision, expectation, and need for USET SPF.
5. Develop strategic alliances to support USET SPF goals and objectives.

USET SPF Overarching Metrics

Multiple variables influence the policy and legislative process, many beyond USET SPF's control. With challenges measuring direct impact of USET SPF's policy and legislative activities the metrics focus on activities engaged in to advance the policy agenda. To measure impact, USET SPF will follow a similar evaluative process as outlined above.

Metrics to consider include:

1. Briefs Submitted
2. Testimony Provided
3. Resolutions
4. Legislative Platform
5. Proactive Legislative Language Development
6. Alerts and Notifications

Appendix A

United South and Eastern Tribes, Inc. (USET)

USET History

On October 4, 1968, the Eastern Band of Cherokees, the Mississippi Band of Choctaws, the Miccosukee Tribe and the Seminole Tribe of Florida met in Cherokee, North Carolina with the shared idea that some form of unity between the Tribal Nations would strengthen their dealings and leverage with the federal government. The result of their vision of "Strength in Unity," was the inter-tribal council United Southeastern Tribes. Incorporated in 1969, United Southeastern Tribes operated first out of Emory University in Atlanta, Georgia, and then moved to Sarasota, Florida. In 1975 it relocated again to Nashville, Tennessee, where it resides today. The organization changed its name in 1978 to United South and Eastern Tribes, Inc. to better reflect its membership, as federally recognized Tribal Nations from Maine to Florida to Texas affiliated themselves with the organization.

Today, USET, the 501c3 primary organization, and USET SPF, the 501c4 affiliate organization, collectively serve as inter-tribal organizations that represents its member Tribal Nations at the regional and national level. USET's scope of services is dedicated to programs that build capacity and support Nation rebuilding to ensure sovereignty and self-determination. USET SPF's focus is advocating for policy and legislation that strengthens sovereign authorities and rights of member Tribal Nations. The coalition of Tribal Nations represented by USET and USET SPF has grown to include twenty-six federally recognized Tribes. As inter-tribal organizations USET and USET SPF actively engage member Tribal Nations in realizing a stronger cultural, social, environmental, and economic future by serving as a vital resource in building capacity across Indian Country through leadership development, providing a forum for the exchange of ideas and information, training and professional development in healthcare, the environment, and economic development, and advocating for a unified voice to ensure the sovereign interest of Tribal Nations are represented with strength and conviction.

USET Mission

United South and Eastern Tribes, Inc. is dedicated to enhancing the development of Indian Tribes, to improving the capabilities of Tribal governments, and assisting the member Tribes and their governments in dealing effectively with public policy issues and in serving the broad needs of Indian people.

Guiding Principle - USET Statement of Unity

We, the Eastern Band of Cherokee, Chitimacha Tribe of Louisiana, Mississippi Band of Choctaw, Cayuga Nation, Coushatta Tribe of Louisiana, Miccosukee Tribe of Florida, Saint Regis Band of Mohawk, Passamaquoddy Pleasant Point, Passamaquoddy Indian Township, Penobscot Nation, Seminole Tribe of Florida, Seneca Nation of New York, Houlton Band of Maliseet, Poarch Band of Creek, Tunica-Biloxi Tribe of Louisiana, Narragansett Indian Tribe, Mashantucket Pequot Tribe, Wampanoag Tribe of Gay Head, (Aquinnah), Alabama-Coushatta Tribe of Texas, Oneida Nation of New York, Aroostook Band of Micmac of Maine, Catawba Indian Nation of South Carolina, Jena Band of Choctaw Indians of Louisiana, the Mohegan Tribe of Connecticut, Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe of Massachusetts, and the Shinnecock Indian Nation of New York being numbered among the Nations People of the South and Eastern United States, desiring to establish an organization to represent our united interest and promote our common welfare and benefit, do of our own free will in Council assembly, affirm our membership in the organization to be known as United South and Eastern Tribes, Inc., and proclaim the following objectives and declare our purpose to be:

1. To promote Indian leadership in order to move forward in the ultimate, desirable goal of complete Indian involvement and responsibility at all levels in Indian affairs;
2. To lift the bitter yoke of poverty from our people through cooperative effort;
3. To promote better understanding of the issues involving Indian Tribes and other people;
4. To advocate for more effective use of existing local, state, federal, and international resources;
5. To promote a forum for exchange of ideas;
6. To combine our voices so we can be heard clearly by local, state, federal, and international governments;
7. To dedicate ourselves to improvement of the quality of life for American Indians through increased health, education, social services and housing opportunities;
8. To reaffirm the commitments of our Tribes to the treaties and agreements heretofore entered into with the Federal Government in a government-to-government relationship and to promote the reciprocity of this relationship and those agreements and treaties; and
9. To provide protection of Tribal natural resources.

"Because there is strength in unity"

USET Statement of Organizational Goals

1. To epitomize the highest ideals of Indian leadership.
2. To assist Board members in serving the needs of their Tribes by providing continuing educational opportunities.
3. To develop and disseminate a comprehensive body of knowledge about USET and its mission.
4. To represent member Tribes and Indian interests before governmental bodies and in all other appropriate forums.
5. To provide opportunity and to assist the members of the Board of Directors in carrying out active leadership roles in matters of public and Indian policy.
6. To enhance recognition of the American Indian in the east, and to foster public understanding of contributions that Indian Tribes make a free society.
7. To work closely with other Indian organizations to advance the needs of Indian people.
8. To provide a forum for interaction and exchange of ideas among Indian leaders.
9. To recognize the achievements of Indian leaders who have contributed to the advancement of Indian Tribes and people.
10. To help Tribal leaders understand their responsibilities, and successfully perform their roles within their Tribal governments.
11. To offer a source for continued development efforts, both on and off the Reservation.