



#ShapeNativeFutures

Making Native Voters Count in Redistricting

PARTICIPATING IN REDISTRICTING

PRESENTER



Samantha B. Kelty

Staff Attorney, Native American Rights Fund

kelty@narf.org

Who Can Participate?

- Anyone, everyone, YOU!
- Every party with a stake in how districts are drawn can voice their opinions.
- Especially:
 - ▣ tribal leaders
 - ▣ designated tribal representatives
 - ▣ tribal members

Why Is It Important to Be Involved?

- Redistricting = power
- Redistricting is used to exclude Native Americans from electing their candidates of choice.
- Fair districting gives Native communities to appropriate resources and representation.

Why Is It Important to Be Involved?

- Advocating now will affect your community's access to resources for the next 10 years.
- You are the last line of defense.

Redistricting Timetable

Date	Milestone
August 12th	Legacy-Format Data Released by U.S. Census Bureau
August 30th	Committee Meeting to Discuss Data
September 9th	Committee Meeting to Discuss Initial Maps
September 22nd	Cancelled
September 30th	Committee Meeting to Finalize Draft Maps for October Tour
September 30th	New-Format Data Released by U.S. Census Bureau
October 11th-13th	Redistricting Committees Holding Meetings Across the State
October 18th	Committee Meeting to Discuss and Incorporate Public Feedback
October 25th	Committee Meeting to Finalize Draft Maps for Special Session
November 8th	Special Session to Adopt Legislation Regarding Redistricting
December 1st	Constitutional Deadline for Legislature to Complete Redistricting

Itinerary for October Tour

City	Date	Time	Location	Address	Room
Rapid City	October 11th	8am (MST)	Black Hills State University	4300 Cheyenne Boulevard, Box Elder, SD 57719	Room 112
Mission	October 11th	4pm	Sinte Gleska University	101 Antelope Lake Circle, Mission, SD 57555	TBD
Mobridge	October 12th	8am	Wrangler Inn	820 W Grand Crossing, Mobridge, SD 57601	Wrangler Inn Conference Room
Aberdeen	October 12th	1pm	Aberdeen Recreation & Cultural Center	225 3rd Ave SE, Aberdeen, SD 57401	TBD
Watertown	October 12th	6pm	Lake Area Technical College	1201 Arrow Ave NE, Watertown, SD 57201	LATC Student Center
Sioux Falls	October 13th	2pm	Southeast Technical College	4801 N Career Ave, Sioux Falls, SD 57107	FADM 186
Sioux Falls	October 13th	6pm	Southeast Technical	4801 N Career Ave, Sioux Falls,	FADM 186

County Redistricting

- Counties are to redistrict at their regular meeting in February 2022.
- Redistricting is done “if such change is necessary in order that each district shall be as regular and compact in form as practicable and [the board] shall so divide and redistrict its county that each district may contain as near as possible an equal number of residents, as determined by the last preceding federal decennial census.” Alternately, the board may use at-large elections.

S.D. Stat. § 7-8-10.

Past Legislative Meetings

6/1: established subcommittee specifically for rural/tribal areas; set 35 legislative districts

8/30: asked for proposed maps; reviewed conurban area maps presented by staff; approved 5% +/- deviation

9/9: approved a Rapid City conurban area; reviewed majority-minority districts presented by staff

Speak with Legislators

Tribal Areas Subcommittee

□ **Co-Chairs:**

□ [Gosch, Spencer](#)

□ [Heinert, Troy](#)

□ **Representatives:**

□ [Cwach, Ryan \(D\)](#)

□ [Gosch, Spencer \(R\)](#)

□ [May, Liz \(R\)](#)

□ **Senators:**

□ [Bolin, Jim \(R\)](#)

□ [Duvall, Mary \(R\)](#)

□ [Heinert, Troy \(D\)](#)

Speak with Legislators

- What are their redistricting priorities?
- How are they, as decision-makers, viewing this?
- What do they think about your proposed map?

Preparing Testimony and Maps

- Speak with community members, community leaders, and neighbors.
- How can you collaborate?
- How can you work together on maps?
- How can you work together on advocacy?
- Build coalitions.
- Monitor redistricting sessions.

Submit a Map

12

- Maps help persuade!
- Submit legislative maps by the morning of Tuesday, 9/28/21

Free Mapping Resources

13

<https://districtr.org/>

- Can be used to draw statewide maps or to draw a smaller map of your community of interest.
- Includes reservations in its maps.

Free Mapping Resources

14

<https://davesredistricting.org/maps#home>

- Can be used to draw statewide maps or to draw a smaller map of your community of interest.
- Has tribal lands [Tribal Lands Maps on Dave's Redistricting | by David R for DRA | DRA 2020 | Sep, 2021 | Medium](#)

Free Mapping Resources

15

Representable

- Use if you only want to create a map of your community – as opposed to creating districts for the state.

Testimony

- Written or oral?
 - ▣ Both!
- Provide short oral testimony AND submit longer written testimony.

Introduction

- Introduction
 - ▣ Name
 - ▣ Tribe
 - ▣ Organization or people you are working with.
- Short statement of what you want.

Example

"My name is _____. I am the Vice President of X Tribe, and I'm here with a community organizer from Y Tribe, other tribal leaders and council members, elders, [names]. We are here with several members of both of our tribes, who share common interests. We would like the Redistricting Committees to keep our tribes in one district."

Focus on These Factors That The Committees Must consider

- What are the existing geographic or political boundaries where you live that are important and shouldn't be divided?
- What are the "communities of interest" where you live and are you a member of any of these communities?
- What are ways to ensure that new districts are contiguous and of equal population?

Describe Your Map

Describe a map of your community

- What are the significant landmarks: rivers, highways, parks, historic sites?
- What are the gathering places: schools, community centers, religious places, and social service agencies?
- Do the current district boundaries divide your tribal community or keep it together?

Location and Instruction

Give specific instructions to map drawers including a location.

Examples

“Keep the Rosebud Tribe in a single-member Senate district.”

“Extend District 27 north into Ziebach County to bring the deviation within 5%.”

Scale

- Think small
- The smaller the area addressed, the more likely it is to be adopted.

Describe Your Community

- What makes your community unique?
- Why is it important that your community be recognized and kept together?

Example

"My tribe is a sovereign, federally recognized tribe located in central South Dakota with 1,239 enrolled members, over 800 of which reside within the boundaries of the reservation. Blue Lake was once totally part of our original reservation and it has great significance to our people. We have numerous cultural and historical sites that are off-reservation which have important cultural ties to our tribe, including pine nut picking, ceremonies, and prehistoric petroglyphs."

Voting Patterns

Describe your community's voting patterns

- What are the results of past elections, especially ones in which a Native candidate ran against a white candidate?
- How did your tribal members vote?
- Did the white community vote as a bloc against your preferred candidate? Is that common?

Share Stories

- Is there a history of discrimination in your jurisdiction?
- Is it difficult for Natives to register to vote?
- Are there obstacles for Natives to get to the polls?
- Have you been intimidated at the polls?

Example

“In organized reservation counties, many Native Americans may not have had the opportunity to vote until the middle of the 20th century. The South Dakota Supreme Court held in 1897 that a person residing on federally controlled land was not a resident of the state and therefore could not vote in a state election.”

Example

“Native Americans living on my reservation have to drive an average of 44.8 miles to obtain a state identification card, compared to 16.8 miles for non-Natives.”

Share Stories

- Talk about discrimination in other areas:
 - Education
 - Employment
 - Health
 - Housing
 - Policing
- Talk about how this affects the ability of your community to participate in political life.

Socioeconomic Statistics

- Include statistics re: socioeconomic disparities in:
 - ▣ Income
 - ▣ Educational attainment
 - ▣ Health outcomes
 - ▣ English-speaking ability
- [Redistricting Data Hub](#)

Example

“My tribe, overall, lives in significant poverty. The median income of our tribe is less than \$40k/year. The eastern part of our reservation, where most of the tribal members live, has a lower median household income than the western side of our reservation where most of the Anglos live. The western side has relatively higher levels of median income and lower levels of poverty. Employment on the reservation is very limited, resulting in high unemployment rates. Housing on our reservation is scattered with tribal members living in small, isolated areas in a widely scattered settlement pattern, and our tribe suffers disproportionately from homelessness and housing instability. 76.9% of our tribe are high school graduates or higher (compared to 94.2% of whites) and 10.4% of our tribe has a bachelor’s degree or higher (compared to 34.7% of whites). A significant portion of our tribe speak our language: _____, and others experience difficulties using the English language. Our tribe lacks access to clean water and to health care.”

Lack of Responsiveness

Do you have examples of a current or historical lack of responsiveness by elected officials toward the needs of your community?

Example

“Just about every bill that has been introduced in the House about Native Americans is blocked on party lines and treated in a different way.”

Needs and Successes

- Describe your community's major concerns and how you have worked together in the past.
- Has your community come together to advocate for common interests or important services? What have those been?
- What are your communities current needs and how can they be addressed by representatives?

Example

“Last summer, our tribe, as well as the _____ and _____ tribes collectively took aggressive measures to combat the spread of the virus in our communities, including shelter-in-place orders and highway checkpoints at our reservation borders to conduct health screenings and limit travel if needed. Our three tribal nations also enacted measures for contact tracing and established quarantine sites.”

Closing

- Thank the members of the Restricting Committees.
- Briefly restate the most important parts of your testimony and your goals.

Example

"I believe my tribe should be kept together for the many reasons our tribal leaders and coalition members have outlined. I want to thank the members of the Redistricting Committees for considering keeping my tribe together."

Before the Meeting

- Submit written testimony within stated timeframe (48 hours before meeting).
- Practice what you will say in advance.
- Speak slowly and stay within a few minutes.

Attending Meetings

39

- Arrive or log on early.
- Take notes. This could be helpful if you end up taking legal action against the redistricting maps.

After the Meeting

40

- Congratulate yourself and prepare to do it all over again!
- Remember, *you* are the auditor of government.

Recap

41

- Submit a map
- Testify in person
 - ▣ Include geographic and political boundaries, communities of interests, and compact and contiguous districts
 - ▣ Describe your map
 - ▣ Describe your community
- Submit written testimony
 - ▣ Describe voting patterns
 - ▣ Share stories of discrimination in voting and other areas
 - ▣ Cite socioeconomic disparity statistics
 - ▣ Describe lack of responsiveness
 - ▣ List your community's needs and successes

CONTACT INFORMATION

Samantha B. Kelty

kelty@narf.org

(928) 814-8922



#ShapeNativeFutures

Making Native Voters Count in Redistricting

PARTICIPATE IN REDISTRICTING

QUESTIONS?



#ShapeNativeFutures

Making Native Voters Count in Redistricting

PARTICIPATE IN REDISTRICTING