

## Abstract by Louie Hena

For: Tribal Lands Climate Conference  
December 5-6, 2006  
Cocopah Indian Nation Casino, 15318 South Avenue B, Somerton, AZ  
<http://www.tribalclimate.org/>

### Tribal Solutions Dealing With Climate Change

The first air emissions inventory conducted on Indian land in New Mexico was completed at Tesuque Pueblo. Results showed that particulate matter and carbon monoxide were the major impacts on air quality. Health surveys identified diabetes as the major health problem in the community.

The Native American Permaculture Design Course (NAPDC) was started as an attempt to address environmental and health problems within the community. Permaculture is a holistic approach based on traditional practices as a tool for improving air quality, water quality, health and ecosystems. Permanent culture is the harmonious integration of landscape and people, providing food, energy, shelter, and other needs in a sustainable way for all species, and working towards a state of maximum natural productivity and abundance.

The NAPDC, held annually in July, is a two-week intensive course that covers everything from permaculture design and home gardens to medicinal plants, food preparation, and intensive grazing. As part of the seed saving course, genetically engineered seeds and the contamination of traditional seeds are discussed. Hundreds of students from across the United States and the world have completed the course.

The recovery of the people is tied to the recovery of landscape, which provides sustenance and food. Food itself is medicine, not only for the soul but for the spiritual connection to history, our ancestors and the land. Indigenous communities have lived through an incredible set of ordeals related to food, nutrition, medicine, and basic survival; NAPDC empowers individuals to continue to keep their cultural traditions alive.