



**International Indian Treaty Council**  
*Consejo Internacional de Tratados Indios*

2169 Folsom Street, M303  
San Francisco, CA 94110

Phone: (415) 641-4482

Email: [info@treatycouncil.org](mailto:info@treatycouncil.org)

[www.treatycouncil.org](http://www.treatycouncil.org)



*Over 5,300 attended the Indigenous Peoples Thanksgiving Sunrise gathering in 2024*

## **International Indian Treaty Council's Indigenous Peoples Thanksgiving Sunrise Gathering, Alcatraz Island, November 27, 2025**

**For immediate release, November 25, 2025, San Francisco, California:** The International Indian Treaty Council (IITC) will hold the Indigenous Peoples Thanksgiving annual Sunrise Gathering on Alcatraz Island, San Francisco (Yelamu in the Ohlone language), from 5-8 AM on November 27, 2025. We will gather to give thanks for the resiliency and survival of Indigenous Peoples' cultures and movements for justice in California and around the world. This is the 46<sup>th</sup> year since IITC began to organize these gatherings under the leadership of the late Bill Wahpepah, Director of Information in IITC's San Francisco Office.

The 2025 gathering will present Indigenous Peoples' living cultures and highlight the true history of colonization and survival on this continent. IITC's commitment to "Truth in History" includes recognizing the true history of the "First Thanksgiving," which, according to the Wampanoag Tribe of Massachusetts, was declared by the governor of Massachusetts Bay Colony in 1637 to "give thanks" for the massacre by settlers of 700 Pequot Indians.

The gathering will also honor and commemorate the historic occupation of Alcatraz that began on November 20, 1969. Native American students from San Francisco State

University, joined by Indigenous students and activists from around the US, held Alcatraz Island for 19 months as "Indian Land." The occupation brought national and global attention to the continuing struggles of Indigenous Peoples to defend their rights, Treaties and ways of life in this country. The occupation began a national movement for the rights of Indigenous Peoples that led to the creation of IITC in 1974 and took us to the United Nations in 1977.

IITC Board member Lenny Foster, Diné (Navajo) Nation, was a young activist when he joined the 1969 occupation. He confirmed that "the Alcatraz occupation called the attention of the country and the world about how Indigenous Peoples rights were still being violated, and that we were still here. We gather on Alcatraz Island every year to honor everyone who came here in 1969, and to remember our ancestors who resisted colonization in the past, all the way back to 1492. We also come together to support the struggles that continue today in our homelands, to protect our sacred places, cultures, and ways of life. We will never forget what happened here and why this place is so sacred for our movement." Lenny will attend the gathering to offer a prayer to honor the veterans of the 1969 occupation.

Morning Star Gali, Pit River Nation, is IITC's California Community and Tribal Liaison and will be the MC for the event. Radley Davis, IITC Board Vice President, also from Pit River Nation, will offer the sunrise prayer. The gathering will open with an Ohlone welcome in recognition of the ancestral homelands of the Ramaytush Ohlone, now known as San Francisco. Participants will offer a sunrise prayer and tobacco to give thanks for our lives, those that came before us, and those still to come. The program will feature Indigenous speakers, singers, drummers, and dancers from California, the Americas, and the Pacific. Over 4000 participants are expected to attend. Presenters will include representatives of the Apache Stronghold who continue to resist a massive copper mine that would destroy the sacred ceremonial area known as Oak Flats (Chi'chil Bitdagoteel).

For those unable to attend in person, the event will be broadcast live via radio on KPFA, 94.1 FM, and online at <http://www.kpfa.org> from 5-8 AM. The event is open to the public. Boats will leave from Pier 33 in San Francisco starting at 4:15 AM. Although ferry tickets are now sold out online, limited tickets will be available for sale at the pier 33 box office, which opens at 3:30 AM the day of the event.

**Contact IITC's San Francisco Office, (415) 641-4482 or [marina@treatycouncil.org](mailto:marina@treatycouncil.org), (650) 255-1594, for general information. Direct media and interview requests to IITC Tribal and Community Liaison Morning Star Gali, [morningstar@treatycouncil.org](mailto:morningstar@treatycouncil.org), (916) 996-6580 or IITC Executive Director Andrea Carmen, [andrea@treatycouncil.org](mailto:andrea@treatycouncil.org), (520) 273-6003.**

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