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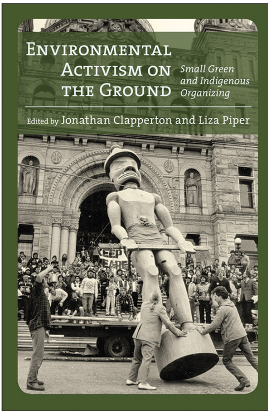

ENVIRONMENTAL ACTIVISM ON THE GROUND: Small Green and Indigenous Organizing

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Conserving Contested Ground: Sovereignty-Driven Stewardship by the White Mountain Apache Tribe and the Fort Apache Heritage Foundation

John R. Welch

This chapter links thinking and working in environmental conservation and historic site preservation to Indigenous sovereignty theory and practice.[1] Since 1992 I have worked for and with the White Mountain Apache Tribe ("the Tribe") at the Fort Apache and Theodore Roosevelt School National Historic Landmark in eastern Arizona. This experience reveals how stewardship for buildings and grounds that previously served as instruments for Western Apache colonization has converged with environmental protection while also advancing and actualizing conceptions of a Native nation's sovereignty. The quest to "save Fort Apache," while consistently well intentioned, initially adopted non-Apache ways of thinking and doing. The project's early focus on non-Apache sources of ideas, technical assistance, and heritage tourism markets implicitly imposed limits on engagements with and benefits to the local Apache community. The shift in the Fort Apache project's focus in the early 2010s, from externally driven research and preservation priorities to an internalist, sovereignty-driven

approach, is opening still-unfolding possibilities for reclaiming and advancing White Mountain Apache rights to control their history, current affairs, land, and destiny. The project's emergent goal is to link Fort Apache's preservation and adaptive reuse as a "town centre" to the buttressing of five sovereignty constituents, or pillars—self-sufficiency, self-governance, self-determination, self-representation, and peer-recognition.[2] The case study also highlights three factors that foster success in community-focused collaborations among Indigenous nations, non-profit environmental organizations, and local citizens: partnership commitments to collective interests, values-based risk taking, and good management.

A brief review of how I came to be involved—personally as well as professionally—in the Fort Apache project provides the basis for my perspectives on how Fort Apache became the most important location in histories of White Mountain Apache colonization and decolonization. In my first year in graduate school I jumped at the chance to get to know White Mountain Apache lands and people. I subsequently took on projects elsewhere—Hawaii, Morocco, British Columbia, and Jemez Pueblo territory in New Mexico—but heartstrings tether my career to the Fort Apache Reservation. After several years of working as a contractor for the Tribe and the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), I took a job as the local BIA archaeologist in 1992 and served as the Tribe's historic preservation officer from 1996 to 2005, when I vacated my post to enable the promotion of Mark Altaha, an Apache citizen. I get back to Apache lands every year to visit colleagues, to help out with the non-profit organization discussed in this chapter, and to otherwise volunteer my time to the places and people to whom I owe my career. I have written elsewhere about the family history and dynamics that impelled my entry into advocacy in general and my adoption of the Fort Apache project.[3] For this chapter, suffice it to say that Irish ancestry, a father who trained me to attend to whatever needed doing without a lot of guff, and a distinctive constellation of bosses, mentors, and colleagues left me destined to "save Fort Apache." The project has required teamwork, of course, but I was first drawn to it specifically because nobody else was willing to take it on. In this sense, the following case study of historic site preservation as environmentalism and of land and resource management activities as acts of sovereignty doubles as a reflexive review of the re-education of an academically trained archaeologist.[4]

This chapter's next section traces the history of the still-evolving place known as the Fort Apache and Theodore Roosevelt School National Historic Landmark (NHL) (Figure 3.1).[5] The site was the primary nexus for US government policies of Apache subjugation, assimilation, and control, a history that endowed the place with exceptional symbolic and practical potentials to contribute to sovereignty reclamation by the White Mountain Apache Tribe. Subsequent sections discuss contributions made through, and lessons learned by, the tribally chartered Fort Apache Heritage Foundation ("the Foundation"). The focus is on how the Foundation is replacing an initial set of operating principles, which used tourism-based economic development and "old-school" historic preservation, with community engagement and environmentalism grounded in place-based heritage stewardship.

The Fort Apache and Theodore Roosevelt School National Historic Landmark

Historical events and processes set in motion at and through Fort Apache made the Fort Apache Heritage Foundation both necessary and necessarily attentive to Apaches' needs and interests. Located in the eastern Arizona uplands, on the southwestern flanks of the White Mountains, the Fort Apache property was a US military facility from 1870 to 1922 (Figure 3.1). Established with the consent of local Apache leaders, the post played central strategic roles in the so-called Apache wars. After confining Western and Chiricahua Apache populations to reservations, the Army presence provided the coercive backstops for various colonial schemes that severed water, minerals, and timber from the reservations and otherwise excluded Apaches from their ancestral territories, economies, and spirituality. By 1922, when the Army finally acknowledged that the Western Apaches posed no threat to the United States and abandoned the post, the always-remote Fort Apache was the last US Army garrison made up only of infantry and cavalry (no mechanized or artillery units).[6]

Following the army's exit, the US government transferred the property to the Department of the Interior for use as an Indian school managed by the BIA. By mid-1923, children removed from their homes on Dine

Figure 3.1: White Mountain and San Carlos Apache reservations, including the location of the Fort Apache and Theodore Roosevelt School National Historic Landmark.

(Navajo) lands to the north occupied the soldiers' barracks and bunks.[7] By the later 1920s, as schools were built on Dine lands for Dine kids, Hopi, Pima, Yuma, and Apache children were transported to the erstwhile Fort Apache. The United States changed the place's name to Theodore Roosevelt School (T.R. School), replacing the soldiers and their guns with civilian bureaucrats and educators bearing almost equally dangerous policies.

Oblivious or indifferent to the socio-cultural and ecological damages accruing from its operations on Apache lands, the government's "3 C" mission (i.e., control, civilize, and commoditize Native Americans and their lands), pressed onward.[8] But the BIA made less headway with the 3 Rs (i.e., "reading, 'riting, and 'rithmetic"). Instead of academic schooling, the T.R. School curriculum emphasized vocational training. Boys learned Western ways to plant crops, hoe weeds, milk cows, tan hides, raise chickens, and fix small engines and vehicles. Girls learned how to clean non-Indian houses and to cook and do laundry using modern appliances. Ndee Biyati'i (Apache) and other Native languages were prohibited at T.R. School. Many students went on to jobs—and some to satisfying careers—as domestics, mechanics, equipment operators, and labourers. On the other hand, the preponderance of benefits from federal law and policy implementation went to non-Indian employers, government employees, loggers, miners, and cattlemen. The patent injustices assured that all T.R. School students learned at least one lesson: suspicion of non-Natives in general and BIA programs and personnel in particular.[9]

As subjugation and assimilation policies crumbled under the moral force of Native American demands for greater autonomy, the T.R. School lost value as a colonializing tool.[10] In 1960 the US Congress placed the Fort Apache buildings and about 400 acres of land in perpetual trust for the White Mountain Apache Tribe, "subject to the right of the Secretary of the Interior to use any part of the land and improvements for administrative or school purposes for as long as they are needed for the purpose."[11] This left the property underutilized. In 1969, the Tribe established the Apache Cultural Center and Museum in the oldest surviving log cabin at Fort Apache, among the first tribal museums in the United States. Fort Apache's land and army buildings were listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1976. The museum moved to other historic buildings over the years, barely surviving a tragic 1985 fire that destroyed most of the collections. The museum was renamed Nohwike' Bágowa (House of Our Footprints) upon the opening of the new facility in 1997. Permanent exhibits installed since 2002 interpret Apache history and culture and provide educational opportunities for Apaches and for visitors from around the world (Table 3.1).[12]

As it became clear to most US policy makers that federal Indian policy would never enable good lives for people, the BIA lost moral, political, and

Table 3.1: Milestones in Preserving Fort Apache

1969	WMAT establishes first Tribal Cultural Center at Fort to rescue the historic site, perpetuate Apache cultural traditions, and reconcile past and present.
1976	National Park Service lists Fort Apache on the National Register of Historic Places. Tribe relocates Cultural Center into the surviving barracks at the Fort.
1993	WMAT adopts the *Master Plan for the Fort Apache Historic Park*, calling for property preservation for tourism-based economic development and interpretation.
1995	WMAT restores the last-remaining log cabin to serve as the WMAT Office of Tourism.
1996	WMAT stabilizes the last remaining stables; designates a tribal historic preservation officer (Welch); hires a professional museum director (Nancy Mahaney).
1997	WMAT dedicates the new Culture Center and Museum and the rehabilitated Elders Center at Fort Apache. The World Monuments Fund places Fort Apache on its 100 Most Endangered Sites list and provides $80,000 to WMAT to further preservation efforts.
1998	WMAT charters the Fort Apache Heritage Foundation; restores an endangered wood frame officer's quarters; initiates the *Fort Apache Survey and Assessment Report* to substantiate claims of BIA property mismanagement.
1999	WMAT files suit against the US in the Court of Claims to recover damages from the US for mismanagement of the Fort Apache property.
2000	With litigation ongoing, WMAT continues preservation work, including reconstruction of an imperiled wood frame officer's quarters, period fencing and outdoor lighting. FAFH host the first Great Fort Apache Heritage Reunion.
2003	Supreme Court finds in favor of Tribe and remands WMAT v. US to Claims Court; through stabilization efforts WMAT recognizes Kinishba Ruins National Historic Landmark as part of the Fort Apache Historic Park.
2004	President's Advisory Council on Historic Preservation recognizes WMAT as a Preserve America Community, the first tribe to receive the honor.
2005	FAHF completes NEH Challenge Grant legacy endowment campaign
2007	US Office of Special Trustee authorizes transfer of $12 million plus interest to an investment account dedicated to the perpetual preservation and maintenance of the Fort Apache property.
2012	Secretary of Interior Salazar designates Fort Apache and Theodore Roosevelt School as a National Historic Landmark; FAHF completes rehabilitation of the BIA Clubhouse to serve as offices for WMAT environmental programs

legal authority. Through the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s, despite the Tribe's repeated affirmations of interests in preserving and using Fort Apache, BIA facilities managers repeatedly disregarded federal environmental and historic preservation laws by decimating the site's character and integrity. In a debate at a White Mountain Apache Tribal Council meeting I attended circa 1992, one council member opposed any effort to preserve Fort Apache. He suggested one way to deal with Fort Apache and its legacies: "bulldoze it." Other Apaches, including Council Chairman Ronnie Lupe, argued on practical grounds that Fort Apache held promise as part of the Tribe's tourism-focused economic development portfolio. Recognizing that Fort Apache's still-substantial value as a heritage tourism destination and interpretive site was being squandered, the council intervened. Joe Waters, one of the Tribe's planners, secured a grant from the Arizona Heritage Fund and, with matching support from the BIA's Fort Apache Agency, hired architect Stan Schuman to prepare a 1993 master plan to preserve and redevelop the property as the Fort Apache Historic Park.[13] Table 3.1 lists highlights from the long and ongoing campaign to repurpose Fort Apache for the benefit of the Ndee (Apache People) and White Mountain Apache Tribe.

The master plan envisioned rehabilitation of the historic buildings and surrounding lands for residential, recreational, educational, and commercial purposes. The plan was to be funded by anticipated revenues from outside visitors and investments by the Tribe and its partners to create offices and enterprises. But management capacities within the Tribe's Cultural Center and Planning Department were overtaxed, so I looked for ways to help. As the BIA's archaeologist, I worked initially to halt the BIA's destructive property use and to encourage the federal government's attention to the millions of dollars of deferred maintenance and repair needs. I gradually added master plan implementation to my duties as archaeologist and, beginning in 1996, the Tribe's historic preservation officer. My early efforts involved fundraising and project management for preservation treatments to Fort Apache's most endangered historic buildings.[14]

By 1998 it became clear that the Fort Apache project was too big for a lone archaeologist to do ad hoc. Even if a full-time specialist had been available, funding was tight. The most optimistic funding projections—via growth in local partnerships, external grants, tribal budget allocations,

visitation, and associated museum revenues—would never provide the sustained financial backing needed for the preservation and adaptive reuse of the fort's historic buildings and grounds. The Tribe's response to this dilemma involved direct appeals for assistance to the US interior department secretary and former Arizona Governor Bruce Babbitt.

Efforts to persuade the federal government to do the right thing soon dead-ended. In 1999 the Tribe sued the United States for failing to fulfill its fiduciary obligations as the Fort Apache and T.R. School property manager and primary user.[15] The suit culminated in a 2003 victory before the US Supreme Court and a 2007 settlement that created a permanent fund to preserve the property and make it available for use in accord with the Tribe's needs and interests.[16] Three of the buildings would continue in use as a middle school for boarding and day students under the direction of a school board appointed by the White Mountain Apache Tribal Council. In separate interior department business, on 5 March 2012, Secretary of the Interior Ken Salazar officially recognized the site's national significance and designated it as a National Historic Landmark (Table 3.1).[17] The NHL designation provided full and final vindication for the Tribe's interests in taking proper care of Fort Apache as a nationally significant historic site and as a place uniquely qualified and equipped to assist the Tribe and the Apache people in the remediation of historical injuries and the persistent crippling effects of colonialism. As discussed in the next section, the tribally controlled Fort Apache Heritage Foundation non-profit emerged as the vehicle for advancing Apache interests in Fort Apache. Subsequent sections make the case that these interests are best understood and advanced in terms of sovereignty enactment.

The Fort Apache Heritage Foundation

As a further complement to legal action, in 1998 the White Mountain Apache Tribe chartered (and the US Internal Revenue Service recognized) the Fort Apache Heritage Foundation, Inc. to provide financial and technical support for further master plan implementation. When operations began in 1998, Foundation goals emphasized (1) preservation of the historic buildings and landscape features; (2) tourism-focused economic development and community betterment; and (3) promotion of the site as a place

for intercultural reconciliation and the perpetuation of Apache heritage, both for the local Apache community and for all visitors. "We envision a future for the Fort Apache/T.R. School National Historic Landmark where tens of thousands of visitors will experience Arizona and the White Mountain Apache people's history each year and will leave with greater understanding and appreciation for this place, people and heritage."[18]

From 1999 to 2006, as the Tribe's lawsuit bumped through the courts, the cash-strapped Foundation struggled toward the creation at Fort Apache of a sort of "Decolonial Williamsburg of the West." During this period the Foundation tended to measure progress mainly in terms of creating tangible and experiential products for tourism markets. Indeed, as more buildings were rehabilitated, more exhibits added, and more publicity circulated, benefits accrued through modest growth in tourism and associated revenues. Registered visitation topped 15,000 annually in 2004, with guests from all over the world joining local and regional clientele.[19]

Big changes came in the wake of the Tribe's 2003 Supreme Court victory and the Tribe's recognition of the Foundation's steady performance and fiduciary potential. The 2007 settlement agreement that concluded the litigation named the Foundation as the BIA's successor to manage the Fort Apache and T.R. School property.[20] The agreement excluded BIA management from all but the three buildings (dormitory, classroom, cafeteria) essential to T.R. School operations, the landscaping associated with those school buildings, the BIA roads running through the property, and the former parade ground (i.e., current school playing field). The agreement also transferred $12 million plus interest into a permanent Fort Apache Property preservation fund (Table 3.1). The settlement agreement requires the Foundation to submit annual work plans and budget requests to the Tribal Council, and to retain at least half of the fund as a property maintenance endowment.[21]

Liberated for the first time from the burdens of project-by-project external fundraising, between 2007 and 2014 the Foundation completed preservation work on twenty-two of the twenty-seven historic buildings at Fort Apache and T.R. School. These projects included restoration of the 1892 Commanding Officer's Quarters; installation of a high-efficiency, solar-assisted central heating and cooling plant; and complete rehabilitation of the 1930 BIA Clubhouse as office space for the Tribe's hydrology,

watershed, environmental planning, and historic preservation programs. By late 2014, the Foundation and its partners had addressed the most pressing preservation threats and initiated plans to rehabilitate the property's 400 acres of campus, pasture, farm, and river corridor. Through these actions and by boosting tenancy in the preserved buildings, the Foundation established practical, administrative, and financial competence as the facilities and lands manager. The Foundation expanded relationships with the Tribal Council, the T.R. School Board, the Tribe's Historic Preservation Office and Behavioral Health Program, the Arizona State Office of Tourism, the Johns Hopkins Center for American Indian Health, and other essential partners.

So What? Rethinking Foundation Clientele and Goals

In a speech made to acknowledge the successes listed in Table 3.1 and the National Historic Landmark designation, the Tribe's Council Chairman Ronnie Lupe graciously stated:

> Fort Apache has always been the main meeting ground between our Apache people and outsiders, the first place people have come when visiting our beautiful lands. We want this NHL designation to be a reminder that we have always welcomed government officials and private individuals into our territory. Some of these individuals and many of the federal policies they were there to implement caused harms to our people and our lands, but we are ready to move forward by adding to public knowledge about what happened at and through Fort Apache and T.R. School. Working with the Fort Apache Heritage Foundation and our other partners we will make Fort Apache a place of pride and prosperity. We will return it, respectfully, to active duty in service to education, commemoration and job creation.[22]

In a similar key, Ann Skidmore, who has served on Tribe's museum staff since 1981 and is currently the administrative manager at the Nohwike' Bágowa Museum, stated:

> Fort Apache is an important part of our history. I am very proud of the work that we have done here and of the lessons we can teach our children and our visitors from all over the world. We have been through difficult times, but we have also come very far in telling the stories of our people and of this place. Recognition of this place as a national historic landmark will help us continue to build Fort Apache as a centre for heritage tourism for the White Mountain Apache people.[23]

These remarks and the 2014 completion of a bundle of building preservation and property upgrades set the stage for Foundation Board reflections. The respite from two decades of frantic grant writing and preservation work to stem the tide of structural loss and degradation at Fort Apache prompted one Apache colleague to quip, "We won!" Indeed, as of 2018, the army troops and most BIA educators are gone, and with them the coercive underpinnings for repressive and extractive educational and administrative policies. Apaches, on the other hand, are unmistakably present and accounted for as a dynamic community. Not counting the roughly 9,000 Apache residents of the adjacent San Carlos Reservation, about 13,000 Apaches are living on ancestral homelands set aside as the Fort Apache Reservation.[24] Apaches continue making lives for themselves and their families, perpetuating long-standing traditions, creating new traditions, and pursuing futures distinct from the recent colonial past. The Tribe and the Apache people are the clear victors in the battle for Fort Apache.

Foundation satisfaction with saving Fort Apache and with the NHL designation runs generally parallel to that experienced by environmentalists responsible for including an imperilled ecosystem in a national park, monument, or wilderness area. On the ground, the success at Fort Apache means that during most business days more than two dozen Apache citizens are working and learning about the conservation and interpretation of watersheds, buildings, objects, and traditions—obvious progress since

the dark period that prompted master planning in the early 1990s.[25] On the other hand, celebration of the 2012 NHL designation naturally prompted, "what's next?" questions. The many positive steps through 2012 swiftly emerged as points of departure rather than termini. Foundation Board discussions soon shifted away from primary concern with preservation and redevelopment efforts affecting twenty-seven buildings and 400 acres to the health and welfare of the surrounding Apache community.

The mandate to expand the positive impacts of the Fort Apache project beyond the property's boundaries is obvious in light of the local community profile. There can be little doubt that Apache people and their lands need whatever benefits can be mustered. White Mountain Apaches are among the loss leaders in the continental-scale struggle against the *Legacy of Conquest*.[26] Before Fort Apache's 1870 establishment, the Western Apaches were among the region's most potent, healthy, and land-rich people, respected by all. Today, the White Mountain Apaches and their San Carlos relatives and neighbours are some of North America's poorest, least educated, and least healthy subpopulations. There is no sugar-coating the reality that diabetes, substance abuse, and other social pathologies are all too prominent in community life around Fort Apache. In the search for an image to illustrate this point, I realized that virtually every photograph of Apache people since 1990 suffices. Figure 3.2 is a photograph at Fort Apache of four of the most powerful and successful Apache women in recent history—all members of the Tribal Council and recognized leaders. All have lost close family members to diabetes or substance abuse. The same is true for almost every Apache who works at Fort Apache and, tragically, anywhere on tribal lands.

Neither non-Apaches who work with the Tribe nor most Apaches think everything that has come by way of Fort Apache is bad and harmful. There are, nonetheless, many things that have been getting worse since the US Army established Fort Apache and asserted cultural superiority, and moral and governmental authorities led Apaches to believe the United States was their friend and ally and then proceeded to open their lands for mining, ranching, farming, logging, hunting, and other means of extracting wealth to benefit non-Indians. Research also belongs on this list of parasitic activities enabled and promoted by military and civilian authorities based at or supported by Fort Apache. Considering only

Figure 3.2: Four Tribal Councilwomen. Left to right: Mariddie Craig, Phoebe Nez, Margaret Walker and Judy Dehose—lead the procession for the first annual Ndee Ł'ade Fort Apache Heritage Reunion, Fort Apache, May 2000. Courtesy Nohwike' Bagowa Museum.

archaeological research, for example, White Mountain and San Carlos Apaches have boosted the careers of hundreds of archaeologists, including mine, by hosting University of Arizona archaeological field schools from 1931 through 2003. Yet archaeologists and curators have been slow to acknowledge the harmful effects experienced by our hosts from the excavations and collections or to respond in kind to the Apaches' generosity.[27]

The Foundation is trying to do better. Recognition of Fort Apache's historical, symbolic, and instrumental position in relation to the surrounding Apache community has, since 2012, become the essential context for deliberations on how the Fort Apache initiative can and must have truly consequential benefits. Still, the real work of reclaiming Fort Apache and T.R. School as an integral part of the Apache community and homeland has barely begun.

Sovereignty-Driven Heritage Conservation at Fort Apache

As of 2018, the reasons for the Foundation's incomplete success are fairly obvious: the campaign that began in 1992 to restore and redevelop the property was pursued primarily in accord with non-Apache principles and priorities. Despite excellent intentions, an understandable emphasis on addressing structural preservation issues, and the creation of many benefits to the Tribe and many of its citizens, Foundation efforts through 2012 sought, in the main, to engage, impress, and market to non-Apaches.

This initial focus was rational in terms of mandates to avoid the further loss of historic buildings and to create needed jobs, but it failed to escape the confines of colonialist mindsets and practices that subordinated local interests to quests for participation in external markets and partnerships. As the Foundation Board undertook revisions to the master plan, the need to systematically prioritize Apache values and interests became clear. In response, the Foundation has set a different course guided both by rigorous professionalism in management and by community engagement in all phases of Fort Apache planning and programming.

Foundation participation in more and better collaborations with the Tribe's citizens has also caused the Foundation to consider its roles and goals as a semi-autonomous subsidiary of the Tribe. How can the Foundation, a small non-profit organization, effectively identify and attend to the interests of the Tribe and its citizens as well as to its court-defined mission? The one-word answer also encapsulates what White Mountain Apaches want: *sovereignty*. Proposed here as the most concise means for describing the goals of all or most Indigenous communities, sovereignty stands in theory and practice as the effective opposite of colonialism. Although it is often conceptualized in grandiose terms, closer engagement with local Apache values and interests has led the Foundation to approach sovereignty, as Willow does, in terms of *doing*, as the veritable enactment of land and community stewardship.[28] Thought of in terms of stewardship at Fort Apache, and perhaps, elsewhere, sovereignty is inclusive, non-authoritarian, grounded in responsibilities to future generations, and exercised through five inter-braided "pillars" or pursuits:

1. Self-sufficiency—creation and maintenance of sustainable supplies of the food, water, shelter, and human relationships essential for people to survive and thrive;
2. Self-determination—policies and practices that foster and enable futures concordant with long-standing and emergent community values and interests;
3. Self-governance—internal capacities to pursue and sustain self-determination;
4. Self-representation—first-person portrayals of cultures, histories, and aspirations;
5. Peer Recognition—establishment of government-to-government and other peer relationships based on legitimate authority over territory, citizens, and resources.[29]

The five-pillar framework offers guidance on ways to serve and integrate the needs and interests of citizens, communities, and nation-scale institutions. Support for the exercise of White Mountain Apache Tribe sovereignty, at levels ranging from basic human needs to expansive intergovernmental relations, is guiding Fort Apache Foundation planning and programming for further decolonization of this emphatically colonial property. The Foundation Board now explicitly and consistently prioritizes local Apache preferences in planning future roles of the Fort Apache and T.R. School NHL in reservation and regional community development, in civic engagement, in citizen education, and in local economic stimulation.

The Foundation is engaging members of the Tribal Council, T.R. School Board, and other partners in ongoing discussions about Fort Apache's short- and long-term roles in building a White Mountain Apache future grounded in long-standing and emergent Apache values. Foundation experiments employing the NHL to effect sovereignty-enhancing policies, practices, and programming are obliging it to reach into the Tribe's civil society, up to the Tribal Council, and out to other partners. The Table 3.2

Table 3.2: Building Sovereignty's Five Pillars

	People	Place	Memory	Plans
Self-sufficiency	Develop internal capacities to steward lands, water supplies, buildings, grounds, collections, and traditions	Rehabilitate the Fort Apache and T.R. School farm fields, orchards, and irrigation systems	Train Apache citizens to collect and conserve oral traditions, photographs, documents, and objects	Use Fort Apache as an enterprise zone for local commerce and reduce reliance on off-reservation businesses
Self-determination	Support T.R. School Board interests in creating an immersion school focused on instruction in Apache language and culture arts and traditions	Collaborate with the Johns Hopkins Center for American Indian Health in harnessing youth entrepreneurship to expand the Internet café in Building 103	Build existing collections into a world-class 'Apache National Archive' repository and center for research, and interpretation	Set aside the site's riparian corridors and other areas of high ecological integrity as Tribal preserves
Self-governance	Host the Whiteriver Unified School District Junior Leadership Academy, serving middle schoolers in a four-week summer programs	Manage the Nohwike' Bágowa Museum Store to become the premier retail outlet for Apache artists and for raising funds to promote Apache arts	Use the Apache National Archives as the destination of tribal government records to boost administrative solvency	Transition the Foundation Board of Directors to (even) fuller control by White Mountain Apache citizens
Self-representation	Assure the primacy of Apache voices in the interpretation of local and regional history and culture	Host each May the annual Ndee Ła' Ade (Gathering of the People) Fort Apache Heritage Celebration and Apache Song and Dance Competition	Maintain respectful separations between interpretations of Apache community history and status and interpretations of Fort Apache and T.R. School history	Privilege Apache values, knowledge and preferences in policies and daily practices (i.e., Board recruitment and decision making, aesthetic choices, menu planning, etc.).
Peer recognition	Provide staff and Board members as trainers for workshops on tribal museum and tribal historic preservation officer operations	Host the only Arizona Office of Tourism Local Visitor Information Center located on tribal lands	Initiate formal and informal intercultural reconciliation processes attended by representatives of groups with ties to Fort Apache and T.R. School history	Maintain and grow public- and private-sector partnerships; Attract federal, state, and private investments to support all of the above

summary of contributions to each of sovereignty's five pillars illustrates how the Foundation is creating synergistic connections among culture, landscape, architecture, local capacities and external audiences, markets, and clienteles.[30]

There are, of course, multiple overlaps and synergies among these five clusters of initiatives. Most projects and programs support and strengthen more than one of the pillars. The essential point illustrated in Table 3.2 and through work at Fort Apache is that sovereignty may be deconstructed and refocused to give meaning and direction to creative ways to harmonize varied interests in challenging contexts. With or without such conceptual deconstruction, sovereignty readily emerges as a practical guide for action directed toward community health, social vitality, and environmental rehabilitation. Fort Apache as an antidote to colonialism is all the more potent because of its early history as a hub for the imposition and enactment of non-Apache values and its recent history as the legal battleground between the Tribe and the United States. The Fort Apache project's ongoing transformation into a context and vehicle for experiments in sovereignty enactment provides the basis for a concluding discussion of factors affecting the initial success and longer-term sustainability of local conservation.

Tribal Sovereignty + Historical Preservation = Innovative Environmentalism

Embedded in the history, structure, and Apache community prioritization of the Fort Apache Heritage Foundation is the "seed" of a distinctive and potentially fruitful strategy for addressing sources and causes of ongoing harms to colonized peoples and rifts between Native and non-Native Americans and Canadians.[31] This strategy carries the promise of linking the Foundation's mandates to preserve Fort Apache with the White Mountain Apache Tribe's mandates to reclaim elements of sovereignty decimated by a century and a half of concerted colonial impositions and environmental damages.

The Foundation's rapidly accruing experience with community-engaged and sovereignty-driven conservation raises issues as well as hope. At least four sets of questions have emerged relating to Foundation efforts

to facilitate enactments of Apache sovereignty. First, how will the Foundation and its partners incorporate and employ Apache ways of doing business? In other words, how can values, interests, preferences, and priorities originating within reservation borders be synchronized with external ("dominant society") goals and operating principles? Second, how readily can Fort Apache and the Foundation be altered and adapted to respond constructively to future changes in local community interests, preferences, and priorities? What might be done to be ready to shift Foundation plans and processes to accommodate community dynamics? Third, how is Fort Apache and FAHF changing the people it touches and those who touch the place and organization (staff, residents, partners, visitors, etc.)? Finally, what public goods (i.e., benefits free to all) are Fort Apache and FAHF producing? What informal social work, public security, aesthetic pleasures, remembering, recreation, and self- and collective care and organizing is happening at and because of Fort Apache? These questions deserve particular attention in a community characterized by underemployment, related social ills, and suspicions of organizations and authorities deeply grounded in historical experience.[32]

As of 2018, it remains uncertain when and how clear answers to these four cloudy questions will emerge, though emerge they must. Fort Apache remains something of an enclave, a place symbolizing a history of lost land, culture, and autonomy. Many Apaches remain suspicious of even the best-intentioned schemes, especially initiatives stemming from Fort Apache. Similar suspicions extend to individuals who seek positions of authority. Subtle and less subtle pressures that inhibit Apache participation in non-family organizations help explain why Apaches have yet to dominate the Foundation Board's membership.[33] A further complication is the fine line between serving the Tribe's interests as perceived by the Tribal Council and the community's interests as perceived by other Apache leaders and the Foundation Board. Respect for formal aspects of the Tribe's sovereignty require the Foundation to treat the eleven-member Tribal Council as the ultimate authority on the Fort Apache Indian Reservation.[34] On the other hand, the emerging vision for Fort Apache as a hub for community processes and civic activities means the Foundation must listen from the grassroots *up* as well as from the Tribal Council *down*. Apache citizens are teaching the Foundation how to better reach into elected and appointed

leadership while increasing responsiveness to the rank and file of actual and possible property users and beneficiaries.

While firm answers to these four questions may be elusive for now, the Foundation's recent experience is bringing to the surface several criteria for taking sovereignty-driven conservation and research to the next level at Fort Apache. These criteria boil down to common sense reiterations of three emerging Foundation mandates: Apaches must be the exclusive or primary beneficiaries of Foundation activities; Apache citizens must continue to gain control over Fort Apache and Foundation governance; and lastly, as community engagement broadens and deepens, the Foundation must shift toward proactive support for community processes to bring to the fore local community views about the merits of the property and of Foundation management thereof.

A second set of criteria for advancing Tribe and Foundation goals derives from the science of sustainable resource conservation.[35] This literature identifies conditions under which communities and managers are likely to cooperate to the benefit of communities, environments, and resources. Research results indicate that cooperation is more likely when the resource being managed is culturally or economically important (or both), when it is adjacent to the community, and when it is managed in accord with community values, preferences, and needs. If these conditions are met, and if leaders emerge who are willing to take political risks to pursue collective benefits from restrictions on harmful environmental uses, then sustainable and community-engaged resource conservation becomes more likely.

All of these criteria are being met at Fort Apache. A growing number of White Mountain Apache citizens now view Fort Apache as a place of real opportunity. Its enclave status is being leveraged by reinventing the place as a sovereignty-driven incubator for creativity, professionalism, self-organizing, and entrepreneurship. The Nohwike' Bágowa museum, in particular, is regarded by most Apache citizens as a uniquely valuable educational and interpretive resource that represents and serves Apache values, preferences, and interests. Tribal leaders increasingly give priority attention to Fort Apache as the locus for new initiatives. Change is palpable and positive.

I close this chapter with an appeal for greater attention by scholars and advocates of all stripes to opportunities presented by the shared interests and goals of campaigns for historic preservation, local and Indigenous sovereignties, and environmental health and sustainability. The theory of progress manifest in Foundation activities and initial responses to the four sets of questions noted above is that community-engaged conservation of the primary locus of Apache subjugation and colonization will restore, enhance, and expand Apache sovereignty. Fort Apache is emerging as the hub for Apache reclamation of birthrights, cultural distinctiveness, territorial connectivity, political potency, and economic vitality. Much remains to be done, but Foundation responses thus far to the White Mountain Apache Tribe's struggles to address persistent social and environmental challenges have boosted opportunities for Apaches to safeguard and use the 400 acres, twenty-seven historic structures, and object and media collections under Foundation trusteeship. Self-sufficiency, self-governance, self-representation, self-determination, and peer recognition are being enhanced and expanded by and through the preservation and adaptive reuse of Fort Apache's buildings and landscapes.

Foundation activities are also revealing the interdependencies of biophysical and socio-cultural heritage conservation, including underappreciated connections among human-built and largely unmodified landscape elements. Indeed, historic preservation and environmentalism share core values, interests, and goals centred on fostering collective senses of place, honouring the complexity embedded in places and ecosystems, and passing on to future generations our ancestors' most significant, authentic, and valuable legacies. As Jane Jacobs observed a half-century ago—and as urban and regional planners continue to discover—people thrive in the complexity of multi-layered, multi-functional, "messy" spaces.[36] On a parallel and more materialist plane, historic preservation done properly, as it is being done at Fort Apache, results in reduced contributions of building demolition debris to landfills, lowered energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions, perpetuation of skilled building trades, and reuse of already altered lands in lieu of new disturbance.[37] Preservation and conservation of historic buildings and sites *is* environmentalism.[38]

Re-Scaling Sovereignty to Boost Personal and Group Accountability and Sustainability

Even casual attention to environmental stories in major news suggests that the fate of our planet rests in the hands of elected and appointed officials in Washington, Ottawa, Beijing, and other national capitals. Major news outlets often features stories of heroes engaged in desperate quests to "stop this" or "save that." The dominant messages are that global-scale issues and concerns are what really matters and that those in positions of authority will take care of the problems. Contrary to the prevailing media focus on (inter)national law and policy, celebrity issues, and public relations campaigns, however, it is work by ordinary people and local institutions to spare specific places from drilling, logging, mining, and mismanagement that provides the essential determinants of environmental and community health and resilience.

The lessons emerging from Fort Apache and from the other stories related in this book offer another view. Few of us—perhaps only 1 percent of the 1 percent—actually live at global scales. Even so, each and all of us have the power to change our worlds. Regardless of how much money we make, we all dwell locally. We live in and take care of houses and apartments and neighbourhoods and towns and cities. We work in businesses and schools and bureaucracies. We make decisions—dozens and even hundreds of them every day—about what to eat, how to move about, who and what to care for, and who and what to ignore for now or later. These decisions, whether made on the basis of our own personal values and preferences or because of duties imposed by circumstances, aggregate into social processes and patterns that define and animate our institutions and societies. Individual acts are the undeniable building blocks of society and history.

Amidst media blitzes relating to global-scale changes in climates, oceans, and supplies of fresh water and farmland, it is easy to forget that one of the most important levels and scales of environmentalism is local, personal, and even attitudinal. Of equal importance to parliamentary debates or United Nations resolutions are the intrinsically individual commitments to save the world or at least a treasured bit of it. It is seldom, if ever, easy to find unity, much less harmony, amidst the cacophony of

individual interests and preferences. But the history of effective conservation in general, and that of the Fort Apache Heritage Foundation and some of the other organizations showcased in these pages, proves that it is possible and worth trying to pull off.

As nations within nations, tribes and First Nations may seem natural contexts for experiments in sovereignty-driven conservation, but the approach can also guide any place- and culture-based community interested in perpetuating definitive or distinctive relations with their lands and traditions. The decolonizing policies and practices described above provide concrete steps for collaborations among Native and non-Native environmentalists, advocates, managers, and researchers committed to the stewardship of places, objects, and traditions.

Notes

1 For an apt review of essential tensions between sovereignty enactment and policy, see Anna J. Willow, "Doing Sovereignty in Native North America: Anishinaabe Counter-Mapping and the Struggle for Land-Based Self-Determination," *Human Ecology* 41 (2013): 871–84. See also chapters in this volume by Willow and Grossman.

2 John R. Welch, "The Last Archaeologist to (Almost) Abandon Grasshopper," *Arizona Anthropologist* (Centennial Edition) (2015): 107–19, https://journals.uair.arizona.edu/index.php/arizanthro/article/download/18856/18499.

3 John R. Welch and Neal Ferris, "'We have Met the Enemy and It is Us': Improving Archaeology through Application of Sustainable Design Principles," in *Transforming Archaeology: Activist Practices and Prospects*, ed. Sonya Atalay, Lee Rains Clauss, Randall H. McGuire, and John R. Welch (Walnut Creek, CA: Left Coast Press, 2014), 91–93; George P. Nicholas, John R. Welch, and Eldon C. Yellowhorn, "Collaborative Encounters," in *Archaeological Practice: Engaging Descendant Communities*, ed. Chip Colwell-Chanthaphonh and T. J. Ferguson (Walnut Creek, CA: AltaMira Press, 2008), 288–90.

4 Sonya Atalay, *Community-Based Archaeology: Research with, by, and for Indigenous and Local Communities* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2012).

5 NHL designation is the highest recognition the federal government bestows on properties in the United States that are not managed directly by the National Park Service as national monuments or national historic sites.

6 Lori Davisson, "Fort Apache, Arizona Territory: 1870–1922," *The Smoke Signal* 78 (Tucson, AZ: Tucson Corral of Westerners, 2004); Lori Davisson, with Edgar Perry and the Original Staff of the White Mountain Apache Cultural Center, *Dispatches from the* Fort Apache Scout*: White Mountain and Cibecue Apache History Through 1881*, ed.

John R. Welch (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2016); John R. Welch, "National Historic Landmark Nomination for Fort Apache and Theodore Roosevelt School" (Washington, DC: National Park Service, 2011).

7 Welch, "National Historic Landmark Nomination."

8 Welch, "National Historic Landmark Nomination."

9 John R. Welch and Ramon Riley, "Reclaiming Land and Spirit in the Western Apache Homeland," *American Indian Quarterly* 25, no. 1 (2001): 5–12; John R. Welch, "Reconstructing the Ndee Sense of Place," in *The Archaeology of Meaningful Places*, ed. Brenda Bowser and M. Nieves Zedeño (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 2009); John R. Welch, "Places, Displacements, Histories and Memories at a Frontier Icon in Indian Country," in *Monuments, Landscapes, and Cultural Memory*, ed. Patricia E. Rubertone (Walnut Creek, CA: World Archaeological Congress and Left Coast Press, 2008).

10 Welch, "National Historic Landmark Nomination."

11 John R. Welch and Robert C. Brauchli, "'Subject to the Right of the Secretary of the Interior': The White Mountain Apache Reclamation of the Fort Apache and Theodore Roosevelt School Historic District," *Wicazo Sa Review* 25, no. 1 (2010): 47–73.

12 Welch and Brauchli, "Subject to the Right."

13 Stan P. Schuman, "Master Plan for the Fort Apache Historic Park," prepared for the White Mountain Apache Tribe and the US Bureau of Indian Affairs (Tucson, AZ: CGD Architects, 1993).

14 John R. Welch, "The White Mountain Apache Tribe Heritage Program: Origins, Operations, and Challenges," in *Working Together: Native Americans and Archaeologists*, ed. Kurt E. Dongoske, Mark Aldenderfer, and Karen Doehner (Washington, DC: Society for American Archaeology, 2000), 67–83, http://www.saa.org/Portals/0/SAA/publications/SAAbulletin/16-1/SAA9.html. In 2005, Karl Hoerig, the Tribe's museum director, took over the escalating responsibilities for master plan implementation and revisions.

15 Welch and Brauchli, "Subject to the Right."

16 Welch and Brauchli, "Subject to the Right," 67–69.

17 White Mountain Apache Tribe and Fort Apache Heritage Foundation, last updated 2018, http://www.fortapachearizona.org.

18 Fort Apache Heritage Foundation, Award nomination submitted to the Arizona Office of Tourism, Phoenix (2012).

19 John R. Welch, Karl A. Hoerig, and Raymond Endfield, Jr., "Enhancing Cultural Heritage Management and Research through Tourism on White Mountain Apache Tribe Trust Lands," *The SAA Archaeological Record* 5, no. 3 (2005): 15–19; Mark Nelson and Will Pittz, "Building the Fort Apache Heritage Foundation: Developing an Organizational System, Management Plan, and Strategic Vision," Report prepared for the White Mountain Apache Tribe and the Fort Apache Heritage Foundation, Harvard Project on American Indian Economic Development, http://fngovernance.org/resources_docs/Fort_Apache_Strategic_Vision_Case_Study.pdf.

20 Welch and Brauchli, "Subject to the Right."

21 Welch and Brauchli, "Subject to the Right," 67–68.

22 Ronnie Lupe, "Fort Apache Pasts and Presents" (speech delivered at the ceremony designating the Fort Apache and Theodore Roosevelt School National Historic Landmark, Fort Apache, Arizona, 12 May 2012).

23 Ann Q. Skidmore, personal communication to Karl Hoerig, Fort Apache, Arizona, 17 August 2012.

24 Ohio Valley University, American Indian Population by Reservations and Statistical Areas, "American Indian Reservations and Alaska Native Village Statistical Areas With Largest American Indian and Alaska Native Populations: 2010," http://www.ovc.edu/missions/indians/indresju.htm.

25 This group of collaborators includes Foundation personnel and the staffs of the Tribe's Museum, Historic Preservation Office, Hydrology and Watershed Protection Program, and Environmental Planning Office: see, for example, Jonathan W. Long, Delbin Endfield, Candy S. Lupe, and Mae Burnette, "Battle at the Bridge: Using Participatory Approaches to Develop Community Researchers in Ecological Management," *Natural Resources and Environmental Issues*, vol. 12, art. 10 (2004), 19–44, http://digitalcommons.usu.edu/nrei/vol12/iss1/10.

26 Patricia N. Limerick, *Legacy of Conquest: The Unbroken Past of the American West* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1987). For a consideration of the links among colonialism, loss of sovereignty, and community health, see Thurman L. Hester, *Political Principles and Indian Sovereignty* (New York: Routledge, 2001).

27 John McClelland, "Repatriation and Collaboration: Opening Our Doors to Indigenous Communities," http://www.statemuseum.arizona.edu/blog/repatriation-and-collaboration-opening-our-doors-to-indigenous-communities/, posted 4 January 2013; Welch, "The Last Archaeologist to (Almost) Abandon Grasshopper"; John R. Welch and T. J. Ferguson, "Putting Patria into Repatriation: Cultural Affiliations of White Mountain Apache Tribe Lands," *Journal of Social Archaeology* 7 (2007): 171–98; Welch and Riley, "Reclaiming."

28 Willow, "Doing Sovereignty."

29 It is, of course, important for community leaders to assess and critique the sovereignty framework offered here, taking what seems useful and offering appropriate amendments. See John R. Welch, "Sovereignty-Driven Scholarship," in *Giving Back: Research and Reciprocity in Indigenous Settings*, ed. R. D. K. Herman (Corvalis: Oregon State University Press, 2018), 307–29; and John R. Welch, Mark Altaha, Doreen Gatewood, Karl Hoerig, and Ramon Riley, "Archaeology, Stewardship, and Sovereignty," *The SAA Archaeological Record* 6, no. 4 (2006): 17–20.

30 Karl A. Hoerig et al., "Expanding Toolkits for Heritage Perpetuation: The Western Apache Ethnography and Geographic Information Science Research Experience for Undergraduates," *International Journal of Applied Geospatial Research* 6 (2015): 60–77.

31 Grossman (this volume); Willow (this volume). See Justin B. Richland, "Beyond Listening: Lessons for Native/American Collaborations from the Creation of the Nakwatsvewat Institute," *American Indian Culture and Research Journal* 35 (2011): 105–9.

32 The questions draw upon James C. Scott, *Two Cheers for Anarchism* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2013).

33 Another reason for the lack of an Apache majority on the Foundation Board is a prevailing expectation for financial compensation for service on the Tribe's boards and committees. Foundation bylaws embrace the organization's de facto status as the trustee for Fort Apache by prohibiting payments to board members, except reimbursement for travel expenses, and by otherwise excluding all incentives for self-interested participation. Because Foundation decision making is determined more by strength of ideas and consensus, Apache citizens on the board have disproportionate influence.

34 "Constitution of the White Mountain Apache Tribe of the Fort Apache Indian Reservation Arizona," 18 June 1934, as amended, http://wmat.us/Legal/Constitution.html.

35 Arun Agrawal, "Common Resources and Institutional Sustainability," in *The Drama of the Commons*, ed. Elinor Ostrom et al. (Washington, DC: National Research Council, 2002), 41–86; Evelyn W. Pinkerton, "Coastal Marine Systems: Conserving Fish and Sustaining Community Livelihoods with Co-Management," in *Principles of Ecosystem Stewardship: Resilience-Based Natural Resource Management in a Changing World*, ed. F. Stuart Chapin, III, Gary P. Kofinas, and Carl Folke (New York: Springer-Verlag, 2009), 241–58; Evelyn W. Pinkerton and Leonard John, "Creating Local Management Legitimacy: Building a Local System of Clam Management in a Northwest Coast Community," *Marine Policy* 32, no. 4 (2008): 680–91; John R. Welch et al., "Treasure Bearers: Personal Foundations for Effective Leadership in Northern Coast Salish Heritage Stewardship," *Heritage and Society* 4, no. 1 (2011): 83–114.

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37 On saving energy through historic preservation, see a case study in the application of the US Department of Energy's Federal Energy Management Program at https://www.energy.gov/eere/femp/downloads/aspinall-courthouse-gsa-s-historic-preservation-and-net-zero-renovation; on using historic site conservation as a context for community engagement and empowerment, see Chris Landorf, "A Framework for Sustainable Heritage Management: A Study of UK Industrial Heritage Sites," *International Journal of Heritage Studies* 15, no. 6 (2009): 494–510.

38 Patrice Frey, "Making the Case: Historic Preservation as Sustainable Development," (Washington, DC: National Trust for Historic Preservation, 2007); Kathryn Rogers Merlin, "Report on Historic Preservation and Sustainability," http://www.dahp.wa.gov/sites/default/files/sustainability_SummaryReport.pdf (Seattle: Washington State Department of Archeology and Historic Preservation, 2011). For a discussion of decolonization from within to address biophysical environmental health, see Elizabeth Hoover et al., "Indigenous Peoples of North America: Environmental Exposures and Reproductive Justice," *Environmental Health Perspectives* 120, no. 12 (2012): 1645–49, https://ehp.niehs.nih.gov/1205422/. As is true for historic preservation, advances in community health foster and feed upon improvements in environmental health.