

Flathead Indian Reservation Federally Recognized Tribe Extension Program Ripple Effects Mapping Findings

The Indian Land Tenure Foundation (ILFT) engaged in a joint collaboration with an evaluation team and the Western Extension Risk Management Education Center to measure the long-term impacts of the Federally Recognized Tribal Extension Program (FRTEP) serving the Flathead Indian Reservation. The Flathead Indian Reservation is the home of the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes, and is comprised of the Bitterroot Salish, the Pend d'Oreille and the Kootenai Tribes. In order to collect this information, the evaluation team used a tool called Ripple Effects Mapping (REM). REM is a storytelling technique that is used to collect stories and experiences from community members. The results at the completion of a Ripple Effects Mapping included both a visual map and a set of narratives that were subsequently analyzed.

The data from 31 FRTEP programs was summarized into a final report – *“Mapping FRTEP Impacts in Indian Country”* and published in March 2022 for the purpose of demonstrating the collective value of the programs. This report can be found [Measuring FRTEP's success - Tribal Extension](#)

In May 2021, a virtual Ripple Effects Mapping event was held with Flathead Indian Reservation Tribal members and others in the community who benefited from FRTEP programs or were aware of the impact of this programming. Those participating in the online event may have included farmers/ranchers, community members including agency and/or Tribal leadership, high school students, 4-H members, and others. Tribal and community members joined either online or by phone.

During the session, participants had the opportunity to tell us stories about how they have benefited from having FRTEP in their community. A facilitator led the conversation, asking each Tribal and/or community member to share their story one at a time. Questions participants were asked to consider included:

1. *Tell us a story about how one of these programs has had an impact on your Tribal community.*
2. *Are you or your family doing anything differently as a result of these programs?*
3. *What has been a personal benefit to you or your family because of these programs?*
4. *What has been the most helpful part of these programs for you, your family, or your Tribal community?*

As individuals spoke, their stories were both recorded and mapped into digital mapping software in order to visually display the impact. No individual's names are included in this data set or the final report mentioned above. Following the REM, those stories were analyzed using the FRTEP priority program areas to determine the ways in which the FRTEP has impacted the Tribe and surrounding community. Additionally, the data was also analyzed to understand ways in which the COVID-19 pandemic has had an impact on programming.

This report includes all of the stories collected from the Flathead Indian Reservation Tribal members.

- Page 2 shows examples of ways you can use this information.
- Page 3 summarizes in themes and subthemes the ways in which the FRTEP program and you as the FRTEP educator/agent had impact in your Tribal community.
- Pages 4-14 includes these themes and all of the stories collected from your REM event.
- Page 15 is an image of the full REM Map, which is also attached as a PDF for reprinting. Additionally, a laminated poster of your REM MAP is being mailed to you, to share with community members, Tribal leaders and others vested in your programs.

If you would like to have an opportunity to discuss in further detail and/or have questions, we can set up a Zoom meeting with one of the Ripple Effects Mapping team members.

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How you can use your Ripple Effects Mapping data:

Storytelling is a powerful technique that can be used in many different ways. Your stories from REM helped us understand the impacts and value of FRTEP that can be shared with funders, Tribal members and leadership. More than numbers, stories can reveal needs, achievements and emotional real-life impacts. Your story examples can be used multiple ways to elevate the importance of the work that you are doing and to demonstrate the collective impact that it is having in your community

Here are three ways you can use the two edited story examples (below) while also utilizing the report's themes and subthemes to demonstrate the impacts this program is having:

Within the Community

- Stories can be shared or incorporated into community celebrations and/or events.
- Communicated to your Advisory Committee to help build capacity for future programming.

In Reports

- Prepared reports Tribal Council members and other community leaders with story examples, themes and subthemes that show how FRTEP is working to accomplish the priority areas established by the Tribal Advisory Council; and which relay the benefits, impacts and other indicators of success as a result of FRTEP.
- Prepared reports for your 1862 Land Grant University or your 1994 Tribal College or University leadership with story examples embedded and that include the themes and sub themes from each of the program's priority areas. Highlight how the Ripple Effects Mapping session empowered community members to share their stories and the benefits inherent in discovering the successes brought about by the program.

In Grant Applications

- Having a solid evaluation plan is critical to writing a successful grant application. Including outcomes from the Ripple Effects Mapping demonstrates the long-lasting impacts of FRTEP and uses a culturally appropriate approach to do so.

In summary, the stories and data that you have collected through the Ripple mapping process can be used many different ways to communicate your successes and to elevate your program not only at the community level – but also to your stakeholder partners, collaborators and other individuals, organizations and entities, for the purpose of strengthening and building the capacity of FRTEP.

Themes and Subthemes

For the Flathead Indian Reservation and community, the impacts, effects, and benefits could all be found within the following five program priority areas and subthemes are listed here. On pages 4-14, you will see the same priority areas, subthemes with individual stories collected directly from the transcript.

1. American Indian Cultural and Linguistic Preservation

- Engaging Adults in Tribal Traditions
- Engaging Youth in Tribal Traditions

2. Indigenous Food Systems for Food Security, Food Safety and Obesity Reduction

- Adult Involvement
- Community Involvement
- Education
- Family Involvement
- Youth Involvement

3. Natural Resource Conservation and Bio-energy Development

- Youth Conservation Education

4. Tribal Youth and 4-H

- Intellectual Engagement
- Life skills
- Personal Growth
- Social Connections & Community Engagement
- Tribal Culture

Overall

- Connections and Partnerships
- Embedded in the Community

Themes, Subthemes and Stories

Theme	Sub-Theme	Statement
American Indian Cultural and Linguistic Preservation	Engaging adults in Tribal traditions	During our Go Red for Women, we precede that conference with eight weeks of sewing class. And we provide the materials for people to come and sew a ribbon skirt, or a ribbon shirt, or a bag, or whatever they want to sew. It's just an opportunity for people to get together once a week to do something that's healthy. And [the agent] had got access to some fabric from [a fabric store] and put the word out to everybody, "Okay, there's a fabric here, come and pick through it." And there's nothing more fun than somebody saying there's free fabric come and get it.
American Indian Cultural and Linguistic Preservation	Engaging youth in Tribal traditions	Looking at the whole list, [the agent] was part of... We were the first school on the reservation who were gifted the opportunity and gifted the possibility of growing [two traditional foods]... And we were gifted the permissions and did prayers and ceremonies with [a Tribal elder]. And that is part of what we have in our garden now. And [the agent] was a huge part of helping with that and having our space where we can have that as our Tribal connections and connections to our culture and connections to our plate. ...This could not have happened without our extension programs through our Tribal extensions.
American Indian Cultural and Linguistic Preservation	Engaging youth in Tribal traditions	Now I'm white and I'll be like, tell me what you know about this plant. And the kids can talk about what they're learning at home, what they're learning from elders about this plant and the natural spaces and kids who often have behavioral issues, all of a sudden [they] like focus and engage and really want to talk about what they're learning and seeing how their native knowledge is relevant and important in the 21 st century. And I've really begun to see a sense of empowerment in the kids. And the same can be applied to the 4-H mentoring program. The Tribal Extension office has been running and I've personally seen, cause I'm taking kids out there like an increase in attendance. Kids are excited because they want to be there. And they're also so excited to learn about native plants.
Indigenous Food Systems for Food Security, Food Safety and Obesity Reduction	Adult involvement	My experience with the Flathead Reservation Extension Program is so far only through the master gardener program, but wow, that was great. Eight weeks of classes, and I'm not a beginning gardener. I have eight raised beds out in Arlee and last fall I planted six fruit trees and about three weeks ago, I just transplanted some yellow raspberries. And so I'm building an orchard. And so that class was really helpful as far as a resource for me to learn new things and the manual that we got, I'm looking at that all the

Theme	Sub-Theme	Statement
		time. Like, "What am I supposed to do at these fruit trees? What do I do with these raspberries?" And I learned some new techniques that I'm really excited to try. I haven't planted my raised beds yet, but that's on the agenda for this weekend.
Indigenous Food Systems for Food Security, Food Safety and Obesity Reduction	Adult involvement	Last year when [agent] had circulated the notice about the gardening class, and that we could acquire a raised bed, well, I just jumped on that. I thought, "great I need this class." Find out why my things didn't grow well or didn't grow at all. And that was my real impetuous there, been aware that we've had an Extension program here for gosh years and years. But it's just kind of something you think, that's what other people need or use and, I probably don't need to bother them. I thought [the agent's notice] was a really great outreach for the community.
Indigenous Food Systems for Food Security, Food Safety and Obesity Reduction	Adult involvement	The other really great thing we got to do in the [master gardener classes] was the canning. And that's another thing that my mom was helping me learn, and sharing her experience of what her mother did, and her grandmother. And we talk about how, "Well you know, in the forties, they were building these big fires and doing it all on her cook stove, boiling water, and it's in July and August." I said, "Well, thankfully we don't have to do it that way now." I am just really thankful for what she shares with me, it's really, I guess, probably my primary inspiration. So [agent] for all the work that you do.
Indigenous Food Systems for Food Security, Food Safety and Obesity Reduction	Adult involvement	<p>So, I accidentally became a gardener because a community member brought me seven plants and I'm like, "What am I going to do with these plants? Why are these here?" "Well, I thought someone might want to grow them." I'm looking around, oh, someone. That's me. So, this is three years ago, I started seven plants at my work with three beds that we had or two beds. I never do anything small ever. So, then I graduated on to doing... I moved home. I did four beds at home, started knocking on [the agent's] door, like "I need help. Is this dirt okay? What do I do with this? What do I do with that?" And I want to say this out loud, it's [the agents'] fault, but I'm getting a high tunnel this year. He's coming out Monday, we're going to measure out how big I want to go.</p> <p>And I wouldn't have done that without the support of some of the people in this group. I wouldn't have done that. I've successfully grown one lilac bush prior to my gardening. And it's through the classes I've taken and it's through the classes I've taught because that's what I do. And the kids we work with and families we work with, I wouldn't have done that.</p>

Theme	Sub-Theme	Statement
		So I don't know what it's going to look like... It's all new, but I wouldn't have done any of that without the support that I have. And because of my mind and how it works, I have to always teach somebody else. Otherwise, I don't keep that knowledge if that makes sense.
Indigenous Food Systems for Food Security, Food Safety and Obesity Reduction	Community involvement	And the group of us that got in [the master gardener class], I think there was about 10 of us. And I knew everybody in there, and you start kind of sharing and talking about what you're learning, and you kind of feel like you have a resource base and a connection to others. So that has been really awesome, and just thankful to have that opportunity to learn, and just try to keep trying new things.
Indigenous Food Systems for Food Security, Food Safety and Obesity Reduction	Community involvement	In addition, I serve as a Co-PI for the [community connectedness-focused] grant, which [agent] also houses through her office. And that particular grant is working on some food sovereignty efforts... But again, you can't put these really cool grant programs somewhere without someone willing to step up and say, "Yes, we'll take them and we'll house them and we will connect them to the community."
Indigenous Food Systems for Food Security, Food Safety and Obesity Reduction	Community involvement	In [program], we teach kids about healthy food and also run the garden, and other programs. And I'm like, okay, looks like who's going to help run the garden? Who's going to do this? And I've been emailing people, connecting people. And I saw [agent] emailing from Ask the Gardner and I emailed her and reached out and she's like, yes, like let's work together on this. And I'm like, oh my gosh, finally, someone and someone who's like excited as excited about gardening and stuff as I am. So I've been working with the Tribal extension office on two really awesome projects. One is the Kay Willie garden. It used to be a school garden, but we're trying to make it into a community garden. And that has just been up and running the last few weeks where we sent out lots of flyers and stuff to get community engaged. And it's really awesome because a lot of our community members are in this school. Some are SKC students and we're able to offer beds with an irrigation system and all the materials that they could need. We had like shovels and dirt and plants, and we're like, here, come garden, come let it be stress-free. And [agent] has been in, in the Tribal extension office in general has been an amazing help with that. And they're going to be transitioning over the takeover. So we do not need to worry about the transition into a community garden, and it's going to be a long sustainable program.

Theme	Sub-Theme	Statement
Indigenous Food Systems for Food Security, Food Safety and Obesity Reduction	Education	<p>In partnership with [agent], she supervises and houses our SNAP Education program on the Flathead Reservation. SNAP serves first, third, and fifth grade students, as well as adults with nutrition and physical activity classes. [SNAP] goes into the schools, goes into community sites like the transitional living center, or the boys and girls club to provide those classes. We can't have SNAP-Ed in a community without the support and supervision of an Extension person, and [agent] is beyond wonderful as a supervisor, supporter, and advocate for what SNAP-Ed offers. And she connects our services to a whole bunch of different areas on the reservation.</p> <p>[NOTE: SNAP-Ed “evaluates thoroughly all nutrition education programming that we do.” Data from the results related to SNAP education on the Flathead Reservation can be shared by SNAP-Ed.]</p>
Indigenous Food Systems for Food Security, Food Safety and Obesity Reduction	Education	<p>And I've seen her teach canning with groups... And she's really resourceful in ... people want to say, "Well, my mom or my grandma didn't can our deer meat that way, or we didn't can our tomatoes that way." She's quick to make corrections saying "We do things according to standards, and if you choose to do things the way your family has done them ... I'm not telling you that you can't do them that way. It's ... there's ... we have ... through the Extension, they have to represent safety." Or where people that they're teaching and serving. And I appreciate that. Not saying you can do it this way, it's that you ... if you choose to do it that way, that's your choice. As a professional, we have to do it by the rules.</p>
Indigenous Food Systems for Food Security, Food Safety and Obesity Reduction	Education	<p>One of the other things that [agent] participated ... we asked the Extension office to set up an information table. We have a couple of big conferences every year, one is our Diabetes Care Conference, and one is our Go Red for Women. We asked her program to set up an information booth, so that she could share some information with people who may not have crossed paths with their program before. And her presence there ... I think maybe it benefited her, as well as our participants.</p>

Theme	Sub-Theme	Statement
Indigenous Food Systems for Food Security, Food Safety and Obesity Reduction	Education	<p>I also participated in her master gardener class, and I was really inspired to ... at first I was going to take the level one and it good, but we had a post-class review to get ready for taking the quiz. And several of us got on there, and that post class quiz was, I thought the most beneficial thing out of that class. Because, a few of us got together and we had really open dialogue and discussion, where the class was, you were the student and someone taught you. The post session was really healthy discussion time, that I think I probably took more away from the discussion time than I did from the actual classes. Because the classes you can look in your binder, you can look online and you can find the answers to your questions. But it's really helpful when you have others who live in your community that are having the ... that you're having the discussions with.</p>
Indigenous Food Systems for Food Security, Food Safety and Obesity Reduction	Education	<p>Well, we have a community-based garden, a school garden here at [local] Middle School, it was one of our family and consumer science, teachers with myself. And we had started putting that together and didn't know where to go, didn't know what to do with resources, for getting it. So kind of reached out, and it was through the FREO, the Flathead Reservation Extension Office, where we were able to not only do the Master Gardener Program, but also they had just started the School Garden 101. So that was a huge benefit for us to be able to start. That's what allowed us for our first year to get wildlife fencing. And we ended up putting that in ourselves because we believe in, as much as we can, having it community centered and student centered instead of having somebody else come in and magically woo there it is.</p> <p>So then we started out with just six little three foot by eight foot raised beds that are like 10 inches tall. And then just expanding out into other things where we've got this. But being able to have something where our goal is working with locally grown foods, working with foods that are indigenous to north America, our food sovereignty teaching people, not only our kids but our kids bringing that home, and having our community in here as well, as much as we can with school regulations, but making it so it's a life skill with our kiddos and their families. And not just a, "I grew a marigold, I'm going to bring it home."</p>

Theme	Sub-Theme	Statement
Indigenous Food Systems for Food Security, Food Safety and Obesity Reduction	Family involvement	So I would say, let me start with personally. I had a ton of just things that our family has been bettered by, by the things that the [Extension] office has done. My family has also been involved in the gardening programs and therefore we have a greenhouse and raised beds and all of that.
Indigenous Food Systems for Food Security, Food Safety and Obesity Reduction	Youth involvement	The other the other story I'll share is that the principal at one of the schools told me, she was getting multiple emails and phone calls on Wednesday night because this particular school was able to set the project up with a live feed. So that children who, because of COVID or for whatever reason, are still being taught at home. They are linking in and watching this live and then interacting with their parents and their teacher. And the principal got phone calls and emails shows around nine o'clock Wednesday night that the parents were not able to get on something was wrong with the Internet feed. And so the school answered that call and went figured out what was going on with the camera so that those parents could get online with their kids and see this this amazing new life happening. It's so difficult sometimes to get parents to a parent teacher conference... to get that family engagement. None of us anticipated these areas of success or outcome. None of us went you know parents are going to be calling because they can't watch it happen. I would attribute part of that drive to be because of covid and the things that we have had to change the things we have lost along the way, as far as being able to communicate in person, but I also think it goes to show the importance of having FRTEP. Without FRTEP, which is completely funding that project, the school very likely could have made that happen. But it would not have been on the scale that we've done; we've purchased the incubators and we purchased 100 eggs. All of the things that happen afterwards we purchased curriculum, so this is an academically research based approved thing. We're having these amazing outcomes that we didn't and it's happening because FRTEP is here, and we look for those things we look for these things to make happen.

Theme	Sub-Theme	Statement
<p>Natural Resource Conservation and Bio-energy Development</p>	<p>Youth conservation education</p>	<p>The other project that we've been working on. I've been working with [the agent] and the Tribal extension office. Who've been running the 4-H mentoring program and behind... one of the elementary schools. There's this old, sort of green space. It's 30,000 square feet, and there's bridges and trees and all this stuff going on and we've cleaned it out, we've gotten picnic tables for it. We've gotten bridges for it, and I take students there all the time. The Tribe, we got Tribal permission and they gave us native plants. And that has been an amazing, awesome area to take kids out there. And we really get to highlight local and indigenous knowledge. They planted, I know they planted a lot of currants and red osier dogwood in the area. And they plan to use it as part of the master naturalist program they'll be running, and I leave it open to community members and stuff. And just having an area where you can have both structured and unstructured time has been incredible. And yeah, it's the Tribal, I cannot, Tribal extension office has been unwavering with their support. And just I'm like, here are my ideas and they're like, go with it. The kids are happy out there. And especially with, they were changing, the reading curriculum and everything so they're going to have a lot more in classroom time, so being able to have these spaces where they can be outside and get to be themselves is incredible. ...it's such a big restoration space. It's going to be progress, but our end goal is to make it handicap accessible. So, all the bridges we just did, and we started making trails for it just cause [the school] does have a pretty comprehensive, special needs program. And we want to make sure all students are included in this outdoor space just because everyone benefits from it. A lot.</p>
<p>Tribal Youth and 4-H</p>	<p>Intellectual engagement</p>	<p>I've got one more that we need to put up on the board and it's a prime example of why a FRTEP program is needed on every reservation in the United States. It's because of the FRTEP program we were able to partner with... and the school district on the 21st Century After School Program and provide some enrichment activities. And by leveraging the FRTEP program with that, I think it's a good partnership. 21st Century is a state-funded program to provide tutoring, enrichment education, and higher education attainment overall. It's an after-school program. It's got three components: academics, tutoring, enrichment, and parental involvement. And if it wasn't for FRTEP, [the agents], we would not have received this funding.</p>

Theme	Sub-Theme	Statement
Tribal Youth and 4-H	Life skills	<p>[Extension] comes on Fridays and does sewing classes and cooking classes and such like that. We have a couple of kids in the club that... Okay, I'm going to try not to cry. Their family just lives on the margins and the impact that consistent relationship that has just happened because of always being there on Fridays for kids that don't have a lot of stability. It's just been tremendous. They provide one more positive adult person in a kid's life. And when they show up every week and the kids know that that is something that they are going to be looking forward to and stuff, and that they're going to learn something. All of that Friday behavior has also extended to the rest of the week, so that when, the two brothers I'm thinking of specifically, when they first started coming to the club, it's been really rough, but not only, I mean, we have relationship with them. And actually one of them also mentors as well earlier in the week with one of the people from her program, but just how they are being able to adjust and live and function and build relationship and all that kind of stuff.</p> <p>It's just been tremendous. And again, that just consistency, that connection point is just been really, really important to the process. And I mean, honestly, I think about one of them, the fact that the, I think seven years old, the fact that that little boy can sit at a sewing machine for what, two hours, hopefully most of the time and complete a project and be happy about that and thrive. I mean, how do you put a number on that?</p>

Theme	Sub-Theme	Statement
Tribal Youth and 4-H	Personal growth	<p>One child I am aware, recently lost his mother he's kindergarten or first grade and has had almost zero attendance. It doesn't matter what the school does, doesn't matter you know the family is just struggling and hurting and they were telling me that since we introduced, I know don't start crying because I'm trying to get through it myself. Since we introduced the eggs [sponsored by Extension] from day one, he came into the counselor's office and said, "I will be here every day, I cannot miss a day of school because I have to be here for the chicks." It was not even in my wheelhouse to say how does raising chickens in the school impact attendance and like I said the counselor, blew her away the principal same thing. None of us have all the outcomes and goals we thought we were going to be doing these wonderful things which we are we had not thought about the impact it might have on a child's attendance. And in kindergarten, first grade, they have no control over whether they go to school or not, but whatever that that attachment for this young person is. His push to be there is helping his family get him there or get him to the bus or however it is he gets to school. He has not missed a day.</p>
Tribal Youth and 4-H	Social Connections & Community Engagement	<p>Currently the Boys & Girls Club have mentoring programs... And so people from [Extension] are coming over and connecting with kids in the clubs, in an afterschool setting. Then we also have cooking classes, sewing classes, all under the 4-H umbrella basically. Then we also are getting ready to start, or her office is getting ready to start a little naturalist class in the summertime. So really helping kids to get out in the community and explore the environment that we live in, which is also really amazing. When I think about the overall impact that, that office has made to our community and for our ability to be able to do the work of the Boys and Girls Club in supporting kids in the club, but also families, I would say the big thing that that office provides is connection points. It's just a tremendous resource. Just from that.</p>

Theme	Sub-Theme	Statement
Tribal Youth and 4-H	Tribal culture	So we did after-school program. I partnered with [the agent] with the after-school program. I do an after-school program, I ran it for a couple of years. In the summertime, I partnered with her as well, where we did a summer program with our kids. And she provided staff that came out. I'm not sure which grant it was... but [the agent] provided the staff, I provided some staff, and the facility and the kids, of course. And we did a really cool summer project. We brought in bees. We started a beekeeping project right at the beginning of COVID spring. Yeah, it's one of the things we do with a Reason to Live Native Program, it's the first grant that I worked under. We were doing the after-school program to try to reach that group of kids. And then just trying to bring in other people, it's hard to do this work by yourself. Like I said, we've had a number of really traumatic events that have affected everybody in the community. And I was really, really overwhelmed because not only did it affect the community, it really affected my personal life. And I needed to have more feet on the ground for these kids because it was pretty hard work. So, one of the times, I don't remember which time it was, but I just put out a blanket, "I need some people here, someone come help." And of course, [the agent] made sure that someone came out to help. It's just, our efforts are trying to help build strength and connections and strong relationships with kids and adults and with kids and kids and with other community members. So that's what we did. And we... will do again.
Overall	Connections and partnerships	I think really the value in the role [the agent] plays there and that that office plays in the community is that connection point.
Overall	Connections and partnerships	So, it's just been, it's been great to work with [the agent] on that aspect and bringing that perspective and our connections to really improve, not just very specific goals, but also much more broadly kind of the youth experience across not just her community, but other Tribal communities as well.
Overall	Diversity and quantity of programs and services	It's just a tremendous resource for not just our organization, but for a lot of different people serving in this community to be able to have a place to call and say, "I'm not really sure how we're going to make this happen or who we need to talk to, to make this happen. But what ideas do you have? Who do you know? How can we make this happen?" And so I hate to say it's like a clearing house, but sometimes it feels like a clearing house.

Theme	Sub-Theme	Statement
Overall	Embedded in the community	It's been so deeply embedded and just really kind of intermeshed with everything that we've been doing here at [the] middle school
Overall	Embedded in the community	But really coming in, in a way where allowing everybody to connect together and have our traditions, have our culture, have all of that, be important and embedded and central to that all as well. I think that's really important for our Tribal extension programs.

Image of Ripple Effects Map

