

## The Tribal Bills *Report*

Five laws already in force, one big bill moving through the Senate right now, and exactly what each one changes on the ground in Pit River country — cited to the section and subdivision, so nobody has to take anyone's word for it.

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**About this report.** Everything here is drawn from the bills and codes themselves — [leginfo.legislature.ca.gov](http://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov), the chaptered statutes, and agency pages — and cited to the pin: section and subdivision where the record supports it, and flagged plainly where it doesn't. Legislation is live; statuses were verified July 6, 2026 and change without notice. This is community information, not legal advice, and not a tribal position.

**24 hrs**

the Feather Alert  
decision clock — Gov.  
Code §8594.13(c)(2)(B)  
(i)

**90 days**

the state's co-  
management  
negotiation clock —  
Gov. Code §11019.82

**10-1**

AB 1881's Senate  
committee vote, June 30  
— now in Appropriations

**Jan 1,  
2027**

two clocks land: AB  
1881's trigger date and  
the CHP's report to the  
Legislature

### 01 — OVERVIEW

#### The short version

For fifty years, California's pattern with tribal rights has been: pass the promise, watch implementation stall, then pass a second law to force the first. That pattern is now running at full speed — and, for once, mostly in the right direction. Since 2022 the Legislature has built a statewide alert for missing Indigenous people and then twice tightened it; ordered crime data split out by Indian country; put a 90-day clock on the state's duty to sit down when a tribe asks for co-management; and it is now moving the most sweeping state religious-freedom bill for Native people in California history.

That bill — AB 1881, the California Indian Freedom Act of 2026 — passed the Assembly on June 1 and cleared its Senate policy committee 10-1 on June 30. As of this writing it sits in Senate Appropriations. This report lays out what is already law, cited to the pin; what AB 1881 would add, including two provisions every tribal office should understand before January 1, 2027; and how to weigh in while it still matters.

## 02 — IN FORCE · SAFETY

### The alert laws — and the data fix

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**The Feather Alert (2022).** AB 1314 (Ramos) created a statewide notification system for endangered missing Indigenous people, codified at Government Code §8594.13 and operating since January 1, 2023. The activation criteria live at §8594.13(e); when they're met and the CHP concurs, activation is mandatory — “it shall activate a Feather Alert” — under §8594.13(d).

**The forcing laws (2024).** Families and tribes reported alerts delayed and denied, so the Legislature tightened the machine. AB 2348 wrote the clock into the statute: the investigating agency must decide within 24 hours whether the criteria are met — §8594.13(c)(2)(B)(i) — and if it doesn't, the tribe may go directly to the CHP, §8594.13(c)(2)(B)(ii). AB 1863 broadened who qualifies and requires the CHP to state its reasons in writing when it denies a request (48 hours per the author's summary; subdivision at leginfo). Every family and every tribal office should know those two numbers cold: 24 hours to a decision, and every no in writing.

**The data fix (2024).** AB 2695 (Ramos) requires the criminal-record data that agencies report to the state Department of Justice to be broken out by whether an incident occurred in Indian country — the direct answer to the finding that most cases involving Native victims never appear in any database at all (Penal Code crime-reporting provisions; exact section at leginfo).

**What it changes here.** These are the statutes under the safety toolkit in this series' MMIP briefing — the 24-hour rule and the tribe-direct route are the difference between an alert and an apology. One more date worth holding: the CHP owes the Legislature a report on the Feather Alert program by January 1, 2027 (§8594.13, reporting provision) — a ready-made moment to put the tribal experience of the system on the record.

## 03 — IN FORCE · LAND & CONSULTATION

### The ground rules already on the books

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- **Non-interference — since 1976** — Public Resources Code §5097.9: no public agency, and no private party on public property under public permit, may interfere with the free expression or exercise of Native American religion, nor cause severe or irreparable damage to listed sacred sites absent a showing of compelling public interest.
- **Consultation on plans — 2004** — SB 18: Government Code §65352.3 requires cities and counties to consult with affiliated tribes before adopting or amending general plans.

- **Consultation in environmental review — 2014** — AB 52: tribal cultural resources are a distinct category under CEQA (Pub. Resources Code §21074), with consultation at §§21080.3.1-21080.3.2.
- **Access, gathering, co-management, return — 2020** — the Governor’s Statement of Administration Policy on Native American Ancestral Lands directs state entities to facilitate all four. Policy, not statute — which is exactly why the next item matters.
- **The 90-day clock — 2024** — AB 1284 (Ramos; ch. 657, Stats. 2024) enacted the Tribal Cogovernance and Comanagement of Ancestral Lands and Waters Act at Government Code §11019.82: the Natural Resources Agency’s Secretary (or delegate) signs co-governance and co-management agreements for the state, and within 90 days of a federally recognized tribe’s request begins government-to-government negotiations. A companion provision deems public-agency powers common to the contracting tribe. The clock starts when the Tribe asks — one page starts it. That letter is Move 3 in this series’ access work.

#### 04 — MOVING NOW

### AB 1881 — the California Indian Freedom Act of 2026

Status, verified July 6: introduced by Assemblymember Ramos February 12, 2026; amended through May 19; passed the Assembly June 1; passed its Senate policy committee 10-1 on June 30; re-referred to Senate Appropriations. If it becomes law, it amends Government Code §7930.205 and adds Chapter 1.79 — §§5097.1000-5097.1005 — to Division 5 of the Public Resources Code. Its own findings do two things worth quoting to any doubter: §2(p) declares that existing California law “does not require Indigenous consent... or provide comprehensive protection” for Native religious exercise and access — the Legislature’s admission that fifty years of paper never got enforced — and §2(j) names the state’s 1854-1859 military expeditions against Native communities including Pit River, by name, in statute.

**The rule.** No state agency may substantially burden a California Indian’s or tribe’s religious or spiritual practice on state lands unless it proves a compelling governmental interest pursued by the least restrictive means — §5097.1001(a). “Substantial burden” is defined at §5097.1000(l) and includes denying access to sacred sites, blocking ceremonial gathering of traditional foods and plants, desecration, and technological screening of regalia and ceremonial items entering state buildings — which under §5097.1000(l)(1)(D)(ii)-(iii) may be inspected by hand only.

**The teeth.** A California Indian or tribe gets standing to raise a violation as a claim or defense in any judicial or administrative proceeding — §5097.1001(b)(1) — with declaratory and injunctive relief, §5097.1001(b)(2), and attorney’s fees to a prevailing claimant, §5097.1001(b)(3). Access to sacred sites on state lands becomes mandatory — “shall allow” — except where public safety or resource protection make access impossible, §5097.1002(a).

**Consent — and the trap inside it.** Before any state-lands project that risks a sacred site, the agency must seek free, prior, and informed consent — §5097.1002(b), expressly invoking UNDRIP Articles 11, 12, 25, and 32 — and the tribe’s consent must be in writing, §5097.1002(c)(1). But read §5097.1002(c)(2) twice: if a tribe does not respond within the timeframe the agency designates, the agency may treat silence as consent. For under-staffed tribal offices, that single subdivision turns record-keeping into survival: every consent request needs a logged arrival date, a calendared deadline, and a written answer — even if the answer is only “we object; consult us.” The file is no longer good practice. It is the difference between consent and default.

**The perimeter.** Site information the state obtains becomes confidential and exempt from the Public Records Act — §5097.1002(d), with the matching exemption written into Government Code §7930.205. Existing MOUs and the authority to sign new ones are expressly preserved, §5097.1004. And the whole chapter is strictly limited to state lands — §5097.1005 controls over everything else, and §5097.1000(k)(2) excludes private lands and city, county, and district lands outright. This is a state-lands bill; the private-land gap this series has documented remains, and agreements remain the only tool there.

**The clock.** “Substantial burden” covers government actions on or after January 1, 2027 — §5097.1000(l)(1). If the bill passes this session, tribes have the fall to get ready: the sacred-site access requests, the consent-response system, the file.

## 05 — FEDERAL SIDEBAR

### The land bill in Congress

H.R. 2400 and its Senate companion S. 2871 — the Pit River Land Transfer Act — would move specified federal parcels into trust for the Tribe. At last verification the House bill had been reported out of committee and placed on the Union Calendar in September 2025; re-verify the live status at [congress.gov](https://www.congress.gov) before relying on it, and see this series’ land-return work for what transfer does and doesn’t accomplish on its own.

## 06 — TAKE PART

### How to weigh in — while it still counts

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- **Where the bill is** — Senate Appropriations. Letters of support go to the committee now, and to your senator before any floor vote. The bill page at [leginfo.legislature.ca.gov](https://leginfo.ca.gov) (search AB 1881) links the committee, the analyses, and every version.
- **Who can speak** — anyone — but weight differs. A tribal council resolution of support carries most; band-level letters and individual constituent letters carry real weight in stacks. State the district you live in.
- **What to say** — one page: who you are, that AB 1881 matters because access and consent on state lands have never been enforceable before (§2(p) says so in the bill's own findings), and — if the Tribe chooses to raise it — that §5097.1002(c)(2)'s silence-as-consent rule should require actual notice and a reasonable minimum response period. That is the one provision where a friendly amendment would most protect small tribal offices.
- **Session math** — the Legislature's 2026 session ends August 31; the Governor then has until September 30 to sign or veto. If it passes, the statute's own trigger is January 1, 2027.

## 07 — THE WATCH

### Dates and rituals

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- **Weekly** — AB 1881 at [leginfo](https://leginfo.ca.gov) — an Appropriations hearing can be set on short notice.
- **August 31, 2026** — last day of session — the bill passes this year or starts over.
- **September 30, 2026** — end of the Governor's signing window for bills passed at session's end.
- **January 1, 2027** — AB 1881's substantial-burden trigger, if enacted — and, separately, the CHP's Feather Alert report to the Legislature comes due.
- **Every publish day** — this report's statuses get re-verified at [leginfo](https://leginfo.ca.gov) before any repost — the same ritual the rest of this series keeps.

The pattern this series keeps finding — pass the promise, then pass the law to force it — is, for once, running in our favor. The paper is arriving. The question AB 1881 quietly asks every tribal office is whether the machinery will be ready to answer it: the site lists, the request procedures, the consent log, the file. January 1, 2027 is not far away.

## § — AUTHORITIES (PIN-CITED)

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*Verified July 6, 2026 against [leginfo.legislature.ca.gov](https://leginfo.ca.gov), the chaptered statutes, and agency pages. Where a subdivision could not be confirmed from the record in hand, the citation says so rather than guessing — confirm flagged items at the source before formal use. Not legal advice.*

Gov. Code §8594.13 — the Feather Alert: definitions §8594.13(a); request and 24-hour determination, §8594.13(c)(2)(A)–(B)(i); tribe-direct to CHP on agency inaction, §8594.13(c)(2)(B)(ii); mandatory CHP activation on concurrence, §8594.13(d); criteria, §8594.13(e); CHP report to the Legislature due January 1, 2027 (reporting subdivision). Enacted by AB 1314 (2022); amended by AB 2348 and AB 1863 (2024) — AB 1863’s written-denial requirement cited to the section; subdivision at [leginfo](https://leginfo.ca.gov).

AB 2695 (Ramos, Stats. 2024) — criminal-record data reported to the Department of Justice disaggregated by Indian country; Penal Code crime-reporting provisions; exact section at [leginfo](https://leginfo.ca.gov) (flagged).

Pub. Resources Code §5097.9 (1976) — non-interference with Native American religious expression on public property; sacred-site protection. §§5097.91–5097.94 — the Native American Heritage Commission’s duties.

Gov. Code §65352.3 (SB 18, 2004) — tribal consultation on general plans. Pub. Resources Code §21074 and §§21080.3.1–21080.3.2 (AB 52, 2014) — tribal cultural resources and consultation under CEQA.

Gov. Code §11019.82 (AB 1284, Ramos; ch. 657, Stats. 2024) — the Tribal Cogovernance and Comanagement of Ancestral Lands and Waters Act: CNRA Secretary or delegate as state signatory; negotiations to begin within 90 days of a federally recognized tribe’s request; companion powers-in-common provision.

AB 1881 (Ramos, 2025–26 sess.), as amended May 19, 2026 — the California Indian Freedom Act of 2026. Would amend Gov. Code §7930.205 and add Pub. Resources Code §§5097.1000–5097.1005. Pin cites in this report: findings §2(j), §2(p); definitions §5097.1000, incl. (k)(2) and (l)(1)(D)(ii)–(iii); strict scrutiny and remedies §5097.1001(a), (b)(1)–(3); access mandate §5097.1002(a); FPIC §5097.1002(b); written consent §5097.1002(c)(1); silence-as-consent §5097.1002(c)(2); confidentiality §5097.1002(d); MOU savings §5097.1004; state-lands limitation §5097.1005. Status: passed Assembly June 1, 2026; Senate policy committee 10–1, June 30, 2026; in Senate Appropriations as of July 6, 2026 — live at [leginfo](https://leginfo.ca.gov).

Governor’s Statement of Administration Policy on Native American Ancestral Lands (Sept. 25, 2020) — access, gathering, co-management, and return of surplus state lands (policy).

H.R. 2400 / S. 2871 (119th Cong.) — the Pit River Land Transfer Act; House bill reported and placed on the Union Calendar, Sept. 2025 (last verified); live status at [congress.gov](https://congress.gov) (flagged for re-check).