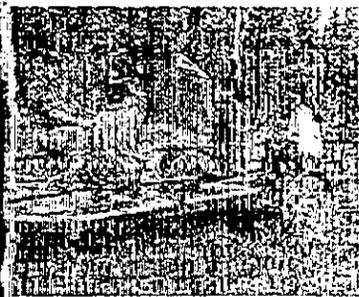


# The Native Village of Tanacross

AN INTRA TRIBAL GOVERNMENT  
ESTABLISHED 1934



## GOVERNMENT-TO-GOVERNMENT RELATIONSHIP POLICY

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### ATTACHED

- A) "Government-to-Government Relations Resolution", Resolution 99-99, from the Tanacross Village Council, signed by President Isaac, December 31<sup>st</sup>, 1999

## INTRODUCTION

Historically, few federal government officials have understood how to effectively and efficiently interact and consult with tribes. The relationship between the federal government and tribes has been awkward and confusing, at best. This document is a first step in the relationship building process between the federal government and Tanacross Village Council, an IRA tribal government.

Tanacross Village Council is a sovereign tribal government recognized as a self-governing entity under federal law. The Tanacross Alaska Natives are also people with full citizen rights as guaranteed under the US Constitution. Because of its unique sovereign status, the Tanacross Village Council, a federally recognized tribe, has the power to make and enforce laws on its lands, and to create government entities, such as tribal courts. In addition, the federal government has a trust responsibility to all federally recognized tribes, meaning the federal government has an obligation to protect tribal resources and the rights of indigenous peoples to govern themselves on tribal lands.

This document was created with input from the Tanacross tribe, federal policy and statutes, and input from other Alaska Native Villages who have had similarly confusing interactions with the federal government. The underlying theme in this document can be summed up in one word, respect. This document also stresses the importance of seeking to understand each other through addressing individual and shared concerns from the past, present, and future. This document is not a list of suggestions, but rather a set of simple ground rules that shall be enacted and respected if interaction with the Tanacross Village Council is expected to be either productive or successful.

### I. GOVERNMENT-TO-GOVERNMENT RELATIONS

1. Begin relations with a deferential attitude.
2. Recognize the Native Village of Tanacross' tribal sovereignty and power to make and enforce laws on its lands.
3. When matters are up for discussion that have the potential to involve the Native Village of Tanacross or adjacent lands, approach the Tanacross Village Council both in writing, and via the telephone, to set

up a face-to-face meeting to mutually discuss and arrive at conclusions on the desired outcome and results of the matter at hand.

4. Obtain written authorization to access Tanacross property or tribal lands prior to gaining access.
5. After a decision is made, if the decision includes taking action or involves onsite work, and/or contracted services, ensure adequate opportunities for the Tanacross Village Council to:
  - 1) Compete for contracts, subcontracts, grants, and participate in cooperative agreements.
  - 2) Benefit from training and/or education.
  - 3) Obtain employment.
  - 4) Obtain surplus equipment and/or real property.
6. Remove, or assist in mitigating, any procedural or regulatory impediments to the success of this government-to-government relationship building process.
7. Assist other federal agencies, in consultation with the Tanacross Village Council, to minimize duplicative efforts and relaying of information.

#### **I. COLLABORATION COMPARED TO CONSULTATION**

Historically, attempts have been made by the federal government to “consult” with Tanacross Village Council. These attempts have often led to ill feelings within the tribe. The cause of these ill feelings is due, in part, to the fact that frequently federal agencies already have decisions made as to what the “preferred decision” should be before consulting with the tribe. It is this form of “consultation” that is; condescending to the tribe, creates unnecessary tension, and breaks down government-to-government relations.

Our understanding of consultation takes on a different meaning. To us consultation is more of a collaborative approach. A collaborative approach to consultation involves both governments beginning the negotiations early on, before final outcomes have been decided. As the negotiation continues both governments are actively and mutually involved in the process up to and including the final outcome of the negotiation.

It is understood however, that both the federal and tribal governments have laws and regulations, which may prevent some outcomes of negotiation. With this in mind, the two governments should make every effort to accommodate each others laws and regulations to attain the best possible desired results of the negotiations.

## II. IMPLEMENTATION

The guidance and wisdom of this document have been understood since time immemorial on the part of Tanacross Village Council. Consequently, this document was ratified and placed in full effect as tribal law on December 31<sup>st</sup>, 1999 at the signing of the Tanacross Village Council's, "Government-to-Government Relations Resolution", Resolution 99-99, signed by President Isaac.

## III. POINTS OF CONTACT

- *Primary point of contact:*

Tanacross Village Council  
Jerry Isaac, President  
PO Box 76009  
Tanacross, Alaska 99776-6009  
907.883.5024 Office  
907.883.4497 Fax  
[jerry\\_isaac@hotmail.com](mailto:jerry_isaac@hotmail.com)

- *Primary environmental point of contact:*

Tanacross Environmental Program  
Adam Martin, Director  
PO Box 76009  
Tanacross, Alaska 99776-6009  
907.883.5024 Office  
907.883.4497 Fax  
[director@alaskanativeresources.com](mailto:director@alaskanativeresources.com)

#### IV. DEFINITIONS:

Collaboration:	Work jointly
Consult:	Seek information or advice from
Consultation:	Meeting arranged to consult
Deference:	Courteous regard; respectful, civility
Deferential:	Showing deference
Implement:	Put into effect
Sovereign:	Possessing independent national authority

#### V. BIBLIOGRAPHY:

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**TANACROSS VILLAGE COUNCIL**

PO Box 76009  
TANACROSS, ALASKA 99776-6009

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RESOLUTION NUMBER 99-99

**GOVERNMENT-TO-GOVERNMENT RELATIONS RESOLUTION**

**WHEREAS**, the **TANACROSS VILLAGE COUNCIL**, an IRA tribal government, is duly constituted and the legal governing body of the **ALASKAN NATIVE VILLAGE OF TANACROSS**, and

**WHEREAS**, **TANACROSS VILLAGE COUNCIL** has recognized a need for better relations with the **UNITED STATES FEDERAL GOVERNMENT** and its agencies, and

**WHEREAS**, the **UNITED STATES FEDERAL GOVERNMENT** has initiated the concept of the formalized government-to-government relations policy as it relates to federally recognized tribal governments, and

**WHEREAS**, **TANACROSS VILLAGE COUNCIL** has decided to formalize and ratify its Government-to-Government Relations Policy.

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, the **TANACROSS VILLAGE COUNCIL** hereby certifies that The Native Village of Tanacross' Government-to-Government Relations Policy is now the formalized government-to-government policy for the **TANACROSS VILLAGE COUNCIL** in any and all matters and dealings with the **UNITED STATES FEDERAL GOVERNMENT** from this day forward.

I, Jerry Isaac, President of the **TANACROSS VILLAGE COUNCIL** do hereby certify and affirm that the foregoing resolution was duly ratified by a vote of seven for and zero against in a special meeting of the **TANACROSS VILLAGE COUNCIL** on this day, December 31<sup>st</sup>, 1999.

**IN WITNESS THERETO:**

SIGNED:

ATTEST:

\_\_\_\_\_  
President

\_\_\_\_\_  
Vice-President