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# Press Release: The Hopi Tribe

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**Initial Date of Release:** August 16, 1999

## Historic Agreement Formalizes Partnership

**Flagstaff, Arizona--** Early today, Forest Supervisor Conny Frisch and Chairman Wayne Taylor of the Hopi Tribe signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) during a ceremony to commemorate the special relationship between the Kaibab National Forest and the Hopi Tribe. This is the first time such an agreement has been signed between the Hopi Tribe and a public land management agency. "The Kaibab is an integral part of the Hopi homeland, and over the years has become a national resource for all to appreciate. The Hopi Tribe is please to share in the joint stewardship of the Kaibab National Forest," stated Chairman Wayne Taylor.

In recent years the Hopi Tribe and the Forest Service have worked together on areas of mutual concern in the Kaibab National Forest. These lands were important to the Hopi long before they were designated national forest. That cooperative effort has fostered a shared stewardship approach to caring for the forest. This is a real honor for the Kaibab, we have taken great care in developing a relationship with the Hopi Tribe. We recognize their special ties to the land and want to work with them to protect the forest's natural resources for our children and generations to come," said Forest Supervisor Conny Frisch.

The MOU documents how the Forest Service and Hopi Tribe will work with each other on such topics as tribal access to traditional use areas to collect ceremonial and medicinal plants, interpretation of natural resources and environmental education, and guidelines for protecting prehistoric burial sites within the Kaibab Forest. In the past, it was common to remove American Indian burials from their resting places for reasons such as archaeological research or construction projects. These human remains were then stored in museums across the country. In 1990, the federal government initiated a repatriation process and required federal agencies to work with museums and Indian tribes to repatriate burial remains. Because of the cooperation and desire of the Hopi and other tribes, all human burials removed from the Kaibab Forest have been repatriated and safely reburied.

"While the stewardship principles are not new, this historic occasion memorializes years of hard work, mutual understanding, and the desire to work in cooperation with one another for the protection and preservation of our natural and cultural resources. I thank forest Supervisor Conny Frisch for her inclusiveness and leadership in formalizing this special relationship with the Hopi people," Said Chairman Taylor.



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