



United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
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H32(2255)

SEP 18 2015

Dr. Diane Gifford-Gonzalez
President, Board of Directors
Society for American Archaeology
1111 14th Street NW, Suite 800
Washington, DC 20005-5622

Dear Dr. Gifford-Gonzalez:

Thank you for your letters dated August 18, 2015 and August 31, 2015 addressed to the Manager of the National NAGPRA Program which followed up on a meeting of August 14, 2015. I appreciate the input and insight of the Society for American Archaeology (SAA) on the important work that occurs under the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA).

I'm pleased to hear that SAA feels NAGPRA implementation at the grassroots level has been proceeding well. I want to assure you that the Department of the Interior, through the National NAGPRA Program, is committed to helping resolve the barriers to NAGPRA implementation at all levels, and the concrete steps you articulated in your second letter are very useful in that regard. A central goal for the National NAGPRA Program is to ensure fairness, balance, and transparency in the NAGPRA process. Many of the suggestions you offered will help ensure that goal can be realized.

The National NAGPRA Program will continue to reach out to the many stakeholders who have a vested interest in the NAGPRA process. I hope SAA will continue to be a constructive partner in evaluating the past actions of the National NAGPRA Program and shaping its future.

I greatly appreciate the time and attention that the SAA Board of Directors and the SAA Repatriation Committee gave to the National NAGPRA Program. I welcome any additional suggestions you might have for the National NAGPRA Program and the NAGPRA Review Committee.

Sincerely,

Stephanie S. Toothman, Ph.D.
Associate Director, Cultural Resources, Partnerships,
and Science