



NRC Seeks Support in Aiding Remote Reservations

National Relief Charities is a nonprofit dedicated to quality of life for Native Americans living on poverty-stricken reservations. NRC has been serving Indian country for over twenty years. But in that time, the landscape has changed dramatically. Today, the cost of living is higher than ever, nonprofit donations are lower for most humanitarian organizations, and requests for support from the reservations are growing.

This increased need for help means that NRC has more people to serve and at a greater cost. We know that tribal economies on many reservations have been depressed for decades – at levels far worse than the US recession that started in 2008. While this fact has remained unseen and unfelt by mainstream America, it has led to scores of Native American families living at sub-poverty levels with basic needs going unmet. This is

unacceptable and NRC feels a responsibility to help close the gap on the disparity for tribes in need. We work to do this 52 weeks a year by providing a broad range of services to tribal programs that address nutrition, healthcare, education, and disaster relief.

Over more than two decades, NRC has been evolving these services and developing a way or working that is effective in Indian country. This is borne out in our long-lasting partnerships with tribal programs and other programs on the reservations, where there is mutual trust.

When we ask our 1,200 program partners how we are doing, their feedback is:

- 89% more effective in meeting their program goals
- 90% helped to provide a higher quality of service for their participants
- 91% saved in funding that can be used in other areas of their program
- 92% satisfied with quality of products from NRC

"I have worked with National Relief Charities for over 10 years as a Program Partner and volunteer. I am a Supervisor with the Rosebud/Treasure WoRC Program on the Northern Cheyenne Reservation in Lame Deer, MT.

*The people we work with are far below the poverty level and struggle to meet daily needs and to purchase necessities that most of us take for granted... I cannot find the words to express how important NRC has been for our clients... people are not just "given a free hand out," yet the clients receive the help they so desperately need."
(Shirley S., NRC Partner)*

This is good news; NRC is making a difference for the social programs that serve the people, and together we are helping over 300,000 American Indians a year. At the same time, the growing need and the rising cost of meeting the need is a challenge. Definitely, for NRC, the greatest challenge is rising fuel costs and the cost of stocking inventory to have on hand for disaster relief.

NRC incurs a significant cost each year trucking needed goods from our distribution centers directly to the doorsteps of our reservation program partners. For the communities we serve, access is a major barrier. Limited jobs, transportation, and stores create added hardships in a stressed economy and make it difficult to meet basic day-to-day needs. Providing this transportation free of charge to the reservations helps alleviate the problem of access. It is critical that NRC be able to continue doing this – rising fuel prices make it tough.



NRC's 40,000 sf distribution centers are located in Rapid City, SD and Phoenix, AZ. Besides ongoing support, reservation programs call on NRC for disaster relief when traditional relief channels fail or take too long to respond. NRC makes a significant investment to have inventory in stock and trucks road-ready for deliveries of nonperishable food, bottled water, emergency blankets, batteries, flashlights, and other supplies for emergencies and winter readiness. Pre-stocking this inventory enables us to provide rapid relief after blizzards, flooding, tornadoes, and issues such as

contaminated water, frozen pipes, and impassable roads that affect entire communities, and we are often the first responders there. Last year, NRC helped 8 reservations with 15 such emergencies.

But disaster relief readiness takes dollars too. Because of the high need and our commitment to tribal partners, we realize it is important for NRC to be consistent in our services and to be a reliable resource. We maintain relationships with each partner to understand the specific needs in their communities and to provide the right products at the right time.

NRC only provides, new, high quality items that are requested by our partners – including simple items that people might otherwise go without, like shampoo, toilet paper, and toothpaste that seem like luxury item on a tight budget.

NRC's services help scores of Indian people on over 75 reservations, and what we need is operating support including dollars to cover the cost of fuel for deliveries and the cost of inventory for disaster relief. We are interested in hearing from any tribes that are in a position to help us cover these costs, so that we may continue to serve tribes in need.

For more information about National Relief Charities, visit www.nrcprograms.org. For specific information about NRC operations, please email Operations@nrc1.org.

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