

**Address by Ed Sarabia of the Tlingit Tribe, Raven Clan
Rally 2010: The National Land Trust Conference
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I'm nervous because when they asked me to do this they said there would be a few people.

Dynamic!

There are a few things that I'd like to say before I go to the prayer. And it's about "gatherings."

All of you've heard the expression "Where does time go?"

But one of the expressions that we, American Indians, talk about when we get together is "What happened to my heart?"

We tend to forget that when we gather, we are sharing time; we are sharing spirit with each other.

Even at a gathering like this, sometimes we forget that we should be happy that we are sharing time.

And time gets away from us - pretty soon ten years are gone and some of us may not be here next year.

It's called "life"; it's called "spirit"; it's called "heart."

And I'd like for every one of you to remember that throughout these upcoming few days.

Share some of that and understand that even this will be new memories. And you would wonder and say, "Wasn't that a great time?"; "Didn't I have a good time?"; "Who was that person I met?"; "Who had the biggest impact on me?"; "Doggone it, I wish I'd have done more with that."

This is an opportunity to share. This is an opportunity to meet. This is an opportunity to understand why you are here.

Because land conservation and land protection aren't just words. It really is what comes in your heart and spirit that gets you here. That connection to the earth; that connection to everybody else that has that same heart.

It's hard to put in words if not impossible. But doggone, doesn't it make sense when we're together and preserve a piece of property and we say, "Boy, did something for people"; "Did something for my heart"; "Did something for my spirit."

Those are the hardest things to put in words.

Congratulations on doing such an excellent job. May our creator hear our words over the next few days. With that, I'd like to say a prayer in our language and quickly in English:

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Thank you creator for my mother.

Thank you creator for my relatives.

Thank you creator for my spirit.

But more importantly, thank you creator for bringing us together for us to protect the world, the land.

And look over us in the days to come and get us home safely.