

Action Plan for the SGU *Sunka Wakan* Camp

Updated September 28, 2016

1994 Tribal Land Grant Goal: To strengthen the well-being of the Sicangu Oyate by creating opportunities for people to connect physically and spiritually with their relatives of the Horse Nation in a culturally-appropriate way.

Approach: SGU will establish and sustain the SGU *Sunka Wakan* Camp that will allow people to directly interact with horses and other natural resources through structured educational programming and services.

Program Areas

1. Equine Therapy for Youth

The SGU Tiwahe Glu kini pi program will coordinate mental health services and resources through equine therapy activities for youth in need at the SGU *Sunka Wakan* Camp. Key elements of this therapy will be services and hands-on activities based on Lakota cultural knowledge and practices (e.g., inipi ceremony; mediation and reconciliation) along with professional research-based interventions. The SGU Human Services department will explore how this equine therapy program can be adapted for military veterans, law enforcement personnel, and those transitioning from incarceration situations.

2. Horsemanship Education

Subject to weather and available resources, the SGU Horse Camp manager and staff will coordinate on-going series of mini-clinics on horsemanship skills development for youth. Outside consultants will be identified to provide advanced and diversified training in horsemanship. Instruction will include “hands-on” activities with equine animals under the supervision of the manager and staff. All activities will reinforce an understanding about Lakota cultural knowledge and practices as these relate to the Horse Nation. An arena will be constructed at the Camp before summer 2017 activities. There will also be some upgrades in equipment subject to the availability of resources.

3. STEM Education

Coordinated through the SGU academic department, a STEM horse camp will be offered to middle-school students in June. Courses will be provided during morning sessions in the subject areas of math, science, geospatial technology, research, and Lakota culture. Students will spend daily afternoons working with horses in round pens at the SGU *Sunka Wakan* Camp. A weekly field trip might also be scheduled to enhance the practical applications of subject matter. At the conclusion of the camp, participants will complete a poster presentation of their research and take home a Lakota horse stick effigy. Course syllabi, transportation, meals, educational learning materials and liability insurance will be key planning elements to consider.

4. Preparation for Rodeo Competition

During the summer prior to the Rosebud Tribal Fair, the SGU Camp manager and staff will coordinate short-term rodeo clinics for area youth with ground instruction provided by experienced rodeo competitors. Emphasis will be focused on good sportsmanship, physical and mental preparation, and demonstrating respect. Evening and week-end roping activities may be scheduled contingent upon demand.

5. SGU Lakota Horse Society & Riding Club

With the direct guidance and participation of Lakota cultural advisors, the SGU Camp manager and staff will organize an ***SGU Lakota Horse Society & Riding Club*** composed of students, staff, community members and cultural advisors. Participants may be involved in parades, grand entries, ranch rodeos, memorial rides, leisurely nature rides and meditation retreats. Other activities could include community workshops promoting Lakota arts skills development based on horse themes (e.g., horse masks, parade regalia, etc.). Another endeavor could be the development and coordination of Rosebud Reservation history tours on horseback. The Society & Club will be identified by an SGU horse brand.

6. Tribal Land Grant Program/Equine Ranch Management

Dependent upon demand and available resources, the SGU Camp manager and staff will be available for conference and workshop presentations about managing a 1994 Tribal Land Grant equine program. They may be also requested to represent the University and participate in collaborations and forums as these relate to Tribal

land management and natural resources development. Future endeavors may include the construction of residential facilities for staff and students, and the integration of “green energy” applications (e.g., solar energy) on the ranch property.

7. Small Business Development

In collaboration with the SGU Institute of Tribal Lands & Economic Development, the SGU Development Office will explore the development of a business plan considering the long-term production of the University’s equine assets. The objective of the plan would be to identify prospective revenue generators for the long-term sustainability of the SGU *Sunka Wakan* Camp and its related programs and services. Grants from public and private sector resources will also need to be explored. SGU students with business majors could also be involved for credit or non-credit activities.

Sung Nagi Kici Okiju
“Becoming One with the Spirit of the Horse”