Dr. Deniss Martinez

Place Based Learning and Cultural Fire Practice in California

Deniss is a community engaged environmental justice scholar. Her research focuses on finding natural resource management strategies that support Tribal self-determination and governance. Using qualitative methods and community-based research Deniss’ current work centers the stories and narratives of cultural fire practitioners in California. Her vision is to work on creating a future that centers the wisdom of Indigenous people, not just as marginally relevant but as central to environmental decision making. She believes that just as people are an essential part of the environment; decolonization, reparations, and justice are essential to a just climate future. She aims to continue work that informs both settler governments and tribal governments on best strategies towards solving the climate crisis in a way that uplifts Tribal sovereignty, ensures justice for communities of color, and builds governance, culture and decision-making based on values of reciprocity, responsibility, and seven generation thinking.