



# Carolee Wenderoth

(She/Her/Hers)

**Tribal Engagement Coordinator**

(EDA, Economic Development Administration)

**CAROLEE WENDEROTH** came to EDA in 2021 as the Tribal Engagement Coordinator. She is the first person to occupy this new position and serves an advisory role on Tribal issues.

Originally from Montana, Wenderoth is a member of the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes. She began her federal career at the Minority Business Development Agency (MBDA), where she was first introduced to EDA and its mission.

“The Tribal Engagement Coordinator position was described in part as building and expanding relationships among all levels of government with American Indians, Indian Tribes, Alaska natives and other Native communities, as well as national and state economic development corporations,” Wenderoth says. “It provoked my interest in joining the EDA, as I felt that this position, coupled with the new American Rescue Plan Indigenous Communities program, would offer me the opportunity to better serve Tribal communities and affect positive economic development.”

This funding plays a huge role in her new position, as Wenderoth manages the Indigenous Communities portfolio while assisting colleagues with Tribal grantees in all other ARP programs. In addition, she is tasked with increasing Tribal knowledge among her EDA colleagues. She also works in conjunction with EDA's regional offices to foster relationships with Tribal communities and increase their participation in EDA programs. Additionally, Wenderoth represents the bureau on a number of Interagency Working Groups.

One aspect of the position that she really enjoys is the interaction it affords her with Tribal communities. This spring, she accompanied Assistant Secretary Castillo to Arizona, where they met with the [Hopi Utilities Corporation](#), finalists in the [Build Back Better Regional Challenge](#).

She has also met with Tribal representatives at the [National Congress of American Indians](#) and the [Reservation Economic Summit](#), presenting information on EDA funding opportunities and how to apply. She appreciates connecting Tribes with Economic Development Representatives, seeing it as the cornerstone connection in the EDA application process.

“I want to make the grant application process as seamless as possible to help ensure greater participation among Indigenous communities.”

A recent transplant to Washington, DC, Wenderoth spends much of her free time getting used to her new surroundings and following her children’s activities. She’s also been known to binge watch the latest streaming shows and spend an afternoon shopping with her friends.

