

NAGPRA and the Ongoing Problem of Contaminated Collections in Museums and Institutions

Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA) 1990

Museums and institutions include repositories, universities, historical societies, federal agencies, medical examiners

NAGPRA impacts Tribes, museums and institutions – Not all museums and institutions have NAGPRA eligible collections

Updated NAGPRA regulations bring new focus to the problem

LEARNING TO LISTEN

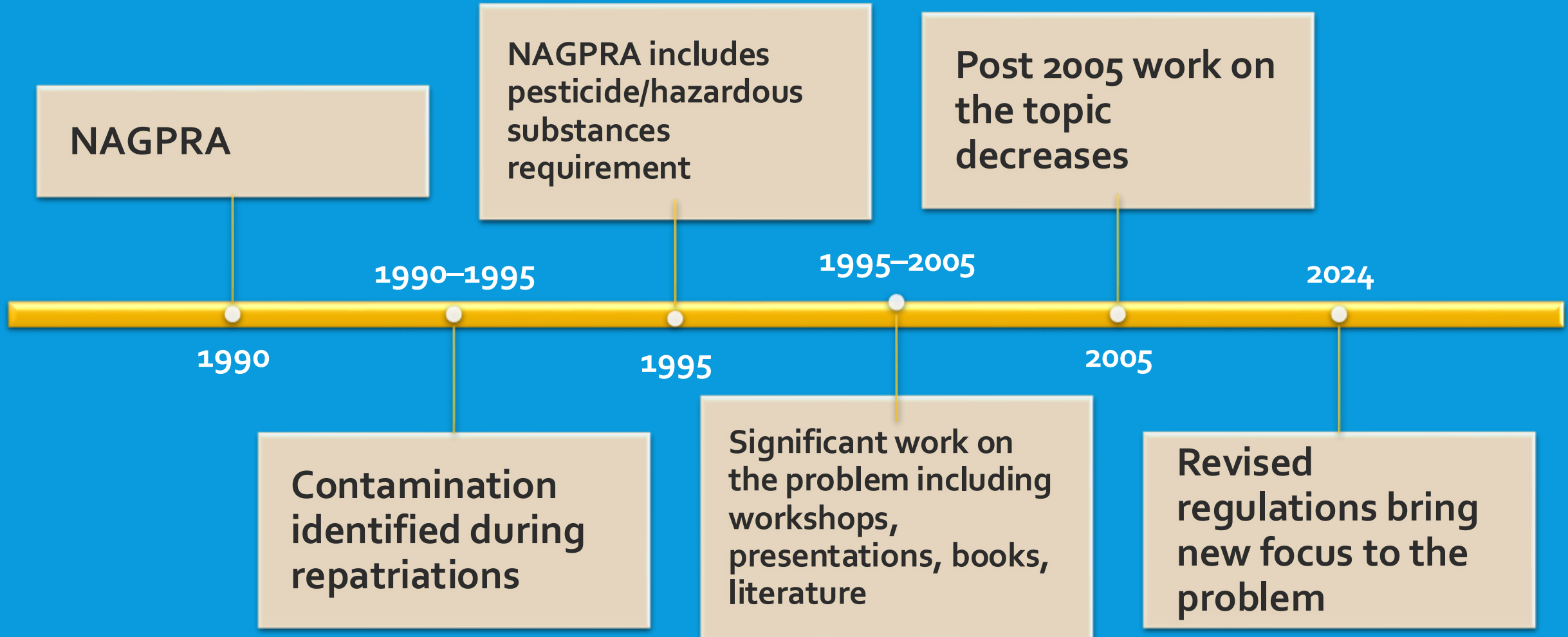
LEARNING TO ASK QUESTIONS

NAGPRA

HAZARDOUS
SUBSTANCES
REQUIREMENT

- Report the presence of any potentially hazardous substances used to treat Ancestral human remains or funerary items, unassociated funerary items, sacred and ceremonial items or items of cultural patrimony **IF KNOWN**

NAGPRA CONTAMINATION TIMELINE



ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH AND INDIGENOUS ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

- Environmental Health: How the world impacts health
 - Lead poisoning
 - Water quality
 - Pollution
 - Agriculture Pesticides
 - Toxins in museums
- Indigenous Environmental Justice (IEJ): Fair protection from environmental health hazards
 - Contaminated items cannot be reused in ceremony or retired and reburied
 - Cross-contamination
 - Arsenic in ground and items
 - Spiritual poisoning

KNOWLEDGE WITHIN MUSEUMS AND INSTITUTIONS FOR CONTAMINATION AND NAGPRA

Very few have policy about contamination and NAGPRA

Very few have staff with expertise on contamination

Lack of knowledge for evidence of contamination

Minimal professional development available

NAGPRA only requires what is known



Beyond NAGPRA

Going beyond what is “known” about pesticides/toxins

CONSULT, ask questions

Professional and ethical responsibility

Beyond
NAGPRA:
Ethical
Importance