

While May 5th is often a time of celebration for many people. For many in the Native American community, it serves as a reminder of those that have been murdered or have gone missing. As many of you already know May 5th is Missing and Murdered Indigenous Peoples Day, a day that raises awareness for the Native Americans and First Nations people who have targeted by violence. Here in California, we are more fortunate in having a much more diverse culture with a wide variety of ethnic backgrounds than other places in the United States. According to Native Women's Wilderness there were 5,712 missing persons cases in Native Communities which makes up about 1% of all missing persons cases in the United States. This number may not seem very significant but when you consider Native Americans make up around 1% of the population that number becomes a lot more serious.¹ According to the BIA website 84% of First Nations and Native American Women have experienced some form of violence in their lifetime and in 2020 they experienced the 2nd highest rate of homicide compared to other demographics. Many of these missing persons and murders go uninvestigated for a variety of reasons from issues with jurisdiction and administration to blatant prejudice from law enforcement especial the Royal Canadian Mounted Police who often refuse to investigate indigenous disappearances.² In spite of all of this there is much hope for the future, because of increased awareness and organizations that are doing their best to bring more attention to the cases, the disappearance of Native American and First Nations people have never been more visible and their voices more heard.



¹ "MMIW," Native Womens Wilderness, accessed April 30, 2024, <https://www.nativewomenswilderness.org/mmiw>.

² "Missing and Murdered Indigenous People Crisis | Indian Affairs," accessed April 30, 2024, <https://www.bia.gov/service/mmu/missing-and-murdered-indigenous-people-crisis>.