Fostering compliance with conservation law amongst indigenous peoples—particularly when they have their own conservation practices and the states enforcing conservation laws are relatively weak—is one of the great sustainable development challenges of our time. The literature suggests that, absent increased state capacity, compliance with law, as opposed to customary norms, is unlikely in areas of state weakness. The literature also largely assumes legal knowledge to be widespread. This assumption is problematical: principal-agent problems prevent many weak states from behaving consistently; populations targeted by particular laws, often lacking education and competent legal advice, then struggle to learn about the law via observation. States that employ regulatory pragmatism, however, may overcome this challenge if they account for on-the-ground realities, such as how legal requirements will be communicated and indigenous fuelwood needs and practices, when designing implementation strategies. In this paper I show that weak states can significantly increase compliance with national park wood collection prohibitions by fostering accurate legal knowledge. In order to do so, I utilize three novel data sets—two quantitative and one qualitative—collected in adjacent districts in India and Nepal. I investigate two pragmatic legal knowledge distribution strategies in particular—delegated enforcement and dissemination through local leaders. The data indicate that strategies consistent with regulatory pragmatism, in contrast to those that are legally doctrinaire or deterrence-based, significantly increase legal knowledge and compliance, even where the state is locally weak. Such a finding has important practical implications. Accurate legal knowledge can be spread in a variety of manners and doing so is often inexpensive. Thus, if developing world states choose to foster accurate legal knowledge, they may be able to reap conservation compliance benefits without making costly enforcement capacity investments. Relatedly, non-state actors that would like to increase compliance with conservation law may also realize gains by directing their efforts towards fostering accurate legal knowledge.