



Tribes / First Nations Committee Meeting

*North Pacific Landscape Conservation Cooperative (NPLCC)
Meeting Summary
Portland, Oregon
September 4, 2014*

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Participants

Ann Wyatt	Klawock Cooperative Association
Brenda Gail Bergman	Chugach Regional Resources Commission
Briece Edwards	Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde
Carson Viles	Tribal Climate Change Project, University of Oregon
Charles Warsinske	Quinault Indian Nation
Courtenay Gomez	Bristol Bay Native Association
David Harrelson	Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde
Don Sampson* (co-facilitator)	Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians
Eli Harris	Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation
Eliza Ghitis	Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission
Eric Morrison* (co-facilitator)	Alaska Native Brotherhood
Ida Hildebrand	Chugach Regional Resources Commission
Jason Pretty Boy	Ecotrust
Joe Hostler*	Yurok Tribe
Jordan Mercier	Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde
Keith Hatch	Bureau of Indian Affairs
Laura Gephart	Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission
Megan Mackey	Yukon River Inter-Tribal Watershed Council
Patrick Mills	Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation
Preston Hardison*	Tulalip Tribes
Samantha Chisholm Hatfield	Oregon State University
Stanley Speaks	Bureau of Indian Affairs
Teddy Wallace-Hardcastle	Quinault Indian Nation
Terri Parr	Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians
Terry Williams*	Tulalip Tribes
Veronica Redifer	Klawock Cooperative Association
William Campbell	Inter-Tribal Council of Nevada

*NPLCC Tribes / First Nations Committee Member or Alternate

Others in attendance

John Mankowski	North Pacific LCC Coordinator
Mary Mahaffy	North Pacific LCC Science Coordinator
Meghan Kearney	North Pacific LCC Communication Specialist
Cristina Gonzales-Maddux	Institute for Tribal Environmental Professionals
Sue Wotkyns	Institute for Tribal Environmental Professionals
Tricia Tillmann	EnviroIssues note-taker

Committee Members and Alternates Not Present

David Redhorse	Bureau of Indian Affairs (Committee Member)
Raymond Paddock III	Central Council Tlingit and Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska (Alternate)

Welcome and Introductions

Several members of the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde sang a welcome song and led meeting attendees in a prayer. Don Sampson, Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians (ATNI), reviewed the agenda and meeting goals, introduced Eric Morrison, Alaska Native Brotherhood, as his co-facilitator, and reviewed meeting logistics and emergency procedures. Attendees then introduced themselves.

The meeting goals Don shared were:

- Learn about the NPLCC and the support they provide to Tribes and First Nations, including a review of other U.S. climate change programs, activities, and funding sources.
- Discuss safeguards for and the appropriate use of traditional knowledges.
- Share experiences of how climate change is impacting Tribes and First Nations and ways to address those impacts, including adaptation strategies and practices.
- Provide recommendations to the NPLCC for how they can better engage and work with Tribes and First Nations.

Introduction to Landscape Conservation Cooperatives (LCCs), the NPLCC, and U.S. climate change programs, activities, and funding sources

Don Sampson introduced the agenda topic and speakers. Presentations covered the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) climate change initiative, LCCs including the NPLCC, other U.S. climate change programs and activities, and funding sources available from BIA.

BIA Climate Change Initiative

Stanley Speaks, BIA, provided an overview of BIA'S work on climate change. He noted climate change is a major initiative within BIA. BIA began funding climate change work several years ago to better understand how climate change would affect treaty rights, cultural resources, and the tribal way of life. Funding has increased over time, but remains insufficient. Approximately 10 million dollars are available this fiscal year. Many tribes have also hired specialists to work on climate change and have supported climate change work within their own budgets.

Partnerships are important for moving forward on climate change. BIA has an agency-wide working group with two representatives from each region. The group identifies funding needs for a three-year period, then meets with the U.S. Office of Management and Budget and other U.S. federal staff to articulate their funding needs. BIA is also working with LCCs on climate change. For example, BIA provides LCCs with funds to support tribal attendance at climate change trainings, meetings, and other events.

Mr. Speaks requested tribes articulate their needs to BIA as well as to Congressional representatives in their area.

LCCs, the NPLCC, & other U.S. climate change programs and activities

John Mankowski, NPLCC Coordinator, gave an overview ([Attachment 1](#)) of LCCs, the NPLCC, and other U.S. federal climate change programs and activities. His presentation described the overall framework for LCCs nationwide, reviewed the mission, goals and organizational structure of the NPLCC, described ways to engage with the NPLCC, and provided information on prominent federal and university climate change resources for Tribes and First Nations in the region. He emphasized that, at its core, the NPLCC convenes partners, funds strategic projects, builds capacity, and communicates to share information.

He explained LCCs exist because natural and cultural resource stressors such as climate change cross geographic boundaries and landscapes. Given the scale of the challenge in addressing stressors and the reality of limited resources, cooperation and collaboration is necessary. Since LCCs are cross-departmental and cross-jurisdictional partnerships, they can help connect Tribes, First Nations, and others with a wide range of U.S. climate change programs and activities. To date, the NPLCC has funded twelve projects related to traditional ecological knowledge and cultural and subsistence resources.

Discussion

Participants asked how the NPLCC was funded and about existing resources available for tribes from the NPLCC.

John explained the NPLCC is funded by the U.S. government and works with BIA, ATNI, and other partners to support tribes in the region. Support includes travel to meetings and project funding.

BIA Funding Resources

Keith Hatch, BIA, reviewed BIA funding resources for climate change, including annual allocation amounts, categories of funding, and programs with climate change components. He stated BIA had \$9.9 million available in 2014 and expects a similar funding amount in 2015. In 2014, there were four categories of funding; these are expected for 2015 as well:

1. Provide, design, and host tribal adaptation trainings and workshops
2. Development of tribal government climate adaptation plans, vulnerability assessments, or data analysis such as modeling or downscaling that supports several tribes
3. Tribal travel grants such as the grant to ATNI to provide travel support to tribes
4. Travel support for tribal representation on National Ocean Policy Regional Planning Bodies

He explained proposals are more likely to be funded when they include collaboration and partnerships, leverage funds, and request less than \$500,000. BIA's forestry grants and one of their youth initiatives both have a climate component.

Discussion

Participants asked for clarification on the 638 authority requirements for Category 1 funds and for information on when BIA would notify them about funding decisions. Participants also asked for clarification on an average or preferred amount for grants.

Keith explained the Category 1 funds are open to Tribes, tribal colleges, or intertribal organizations with 638 contracting authority or in partnership with a tribe with 638 authority who is willing to process funding. He offered to inquire about when the notice of funding decisions will be made and stated proposals less than \$500,000 were more likely to be funded.

One participant noted tribes need to be creative about funding and encouraged tribes to talk with U.S. agencies about incorporating climate change in their funding programs. The U.S. Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, and other agencies also have funding opportunities (see [President's Climate Action Plan](#), pages 12-15).

Traditional Knowledges: Experiences, Safeguards, and Appropriate Use

Terry Williams, Tulalip Tribes, introduced the agenda topic by sharing his early experience working in the treaty rights office and traveling to meet tribes to learn about issues important to them. He also provided an overview of the U.S. position and action on climate change, emphasized that traditional knowledge is private, held, and owned by tribes, and reviewed the ways in which tribes can protect their cultural resources from climate impacts using the law and other means. He identified opportunities to collaborate with U.S. federal agencies. These include incorporating more information on cultural resource impacts to tribes in the National Fish, Wildlife, and Plants Climate Adaptation Strategy, harmonizing U.S. laws to provide consistent guidance for landscape decisions, and collecting and sharing adaptation solutions. He expressed that when meeting with staff from U.S. government agencies, tribes need to bring the U.S. trust responsibility to the forefront, emphasize that a healthy system is necessary to support specific activities such as farming, and identify what information, if any, to share about fish, wildlife, and plants. Terry concluded by introducing Preston Hardison, Tulalip Tribes.

Traditional Knowledges Presentation

Preston Hardison began his presentation ([Attachment 2](#)) by noting the Tulalip Tribes received a grant from the NPLCC to work with the Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission (NWIFC) to develop guidelines for traditional knowledges. They assembled a Climate and Traditional Knowledges Workgroup (Workgroup) comprised of seventeen people working around the U.S. on climate change and traditional knowledges. The Workgroup drafted “Guidelines for Considering Traditional Knowledges in Climate Change Initiatives” ([Attachment 3](#)). Preston expressed the goal of the document is to provide an unfiltered indigenous perspective on climate change and traditional knowledges. For this reason, the Workgroup decided to forego the U.S. approval process, which would involve a line-by-line review.

Preston noted traditional knowledges are plural because there are many types of knowledge, both within a tribe and between tribes. He reviewed the major differences between Western science and traditional knowledges, then described the need for the guidelines. He noted that although there is little guidance available, tribes must engage in climate change work to ensure their needs and values are included in solutions and that solutions do not harm them. Further, he explained existing guidance does not fully reflect indigenous views and is often unknown or not followed when working with tribes.

The remainder of the presentation covered:

- Internal ecology of the guidelines, which includes values, procedures, and benefit sharing
- External ecology of the guidelines, which includes standing, the nature of traditional knowledges, ownership of exchanged knowledges, control of exchanged knowledges, ownership of products, control over the publication and distribution of products, legal issues, loss of benefit sharing, and co-protection
- Primary principles underlying the guidelines, which include First Do No Harm, Tribal Sovereignty, and Free, Prior and Informed Consent
- The eight guidelines, which are listed in the presentation ([Attachment 2](#)) and described in the guidelines document ([Attachment 3](#))
- Risks and opportunities associated with traditional knowledge sharing, co-production, and co-creation

Preston concluded by stating knowledge within tribes is not open and free as it is in Western science and culture. He stated it should be remembered that all tribal knowledge comes with a context.

Discussion

Participants asked for clarification about the goal of the document, how it will be used, and the specific guidelines for knowledge exchange.

Preston stated the document is intended to help tribes learn about intellectual property rights, a topic which is unfamiliar to many tribes. The document is also intended to provide guidance to U.S. agencies about how to work with tribes on traditional knowledges. The document does not recommend an approach to knowledge exchange – that is the decision of each tribe and all tribes have the right not to share their knowledges. Often, a knowledge exchange is happening without the tribe knowing it, without an agreement in place, and/or to address issues tribes face. He stated this does not necessarily need to happen, and some tribes do not know that.

Participants pointed out that some of the external ecology – ownership and control over exchanged knowledges – also happens within the tribe itself because people vary by if and how they want to gather and share knowledge.

One participant shared that the Yurok Tribe was also funded by the NPLCC for a traditional knowledge grant. The Yurok members and staff responsible for the project worked with the Yurok Tribe's legal department to establish a protocol and agreements with each tribal elder they interviewed. In this way, the information shared by tribal elders is protected and bound by the agreement, and there is some legal standing behind the knowledge shared.

Many participants expressed appreciation for the traditional knowledge guidelines and the work that went into it. Participants shared their experiences with sharing and not sharing traditional knowledge outside their tribe and their recommendations for how tribes can consider proceeding with sharing or not sharing traditional knowledges. Some participants noted agreements may or may not be followed and suggested tribes need to exercise their sovereignty and take the lead on the governance issues associated with traditional knowledges. They reiterated knowledge does not have to be shared outside the tribe. Other participants shared that collaborating with U.S. federal agencies had resulted in both partners being able to produce, share, acquire, and use information that was useful. For example, tribes were better able to meet their needs and the U.S. was better able to meet its trust obligation to tribes.

Tribes and First Nations Experiences with Climate Change Impacts and Response

Don Sampson and Eric Morrison introduced the agenda topic and invited participants to engage in an open discussion of climate change impacts and response. Participants shared their experiences with climate change impacts and response, beginning with northwest California and heading northward.

Discussion

Many participants expressed support for a tribal forum to work on climate change in the broader Northwest and Western regions, including areas east and south of the NPLCC region in the Great Northern and Great Basin LCCs. The forum would be a place for tribes to gather and discuss climate change and other issues tribes face. Participants also supported the development of a clearinghouse or central repository for tribal resources, either within a tribe or for multiple tribes. Participants noted ATNI is hosting a tribal climate change workshop from September 22-25, 2014 in Pendleton, Oregon at the Wildhorse Resort and Casino. The hope is to engage tribal leaders and staff and begin a climate change forum.

Many participants shared similar challenges, concerns, and interests, including:

- A lack of self-sufficiency and an interest in supporting tribal members who would like to become climate change experts or develop climate change programs for one or more tribes
- The loss of traditional knowledges and way of life due to climate change impacts, especially reduced air and water quality, ocean acidification, and changes in the health and migratory patterns of culturally important species
- A need for more tribal perspectives in U.S. climate change programs and activities

Northwest California

Participants shared that climate change is one of several stressors faced by tribes in northwest California. The key issues are wildfire smoke, decreased water quality, drought, the damming of the Klamath River, deforestation, and urbanization. Participants noted fighting fires requires large quantities of water, which are difficult to obtain during a drought. Participants also explained there is general agreement among the Klamath Tribes to take down four of the five dams on the Klamath River to restore ecosystem health and build resilience to climate change impacts, which is scheduled to start in 2020.

Participants also stated the loss of culture and traditional learning opportunities due to climate change impacts is a significant concern. There is community outreach within the Yurok Tribe about climate change, including working with youth to educate and pass along traditional and climate change knowledge.

Western Oregon

Participants explained that in the Willamette Valley and coastal Oregon, changing tidal patterns and other climate impacts have disrupted the availability of cultural resources and traditional patterns for gathering and collecting traditional foods such as salmon, deer, fruit, and shellfish and traditional materials for regalia. Participants stated many of these changes have occurred within a decade and it is difficult to imagine what the next decade will look like.

Participants shared that in coastal Oregon (Siletz Tribe), the Siuslaw River used to be very clear but is now quite turbid. This has affected the availability of traditional foods and the ability to harvest them. For example, shellfish harvest used to be far more abundant and could be traded for other resources from inland areas. Overall, participants noted access to traditional resources is getting more difficult due to climate and non-climate stressors such as changes in laws.

Participants stated the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde have studied sea level rise in the lower Columbia River to assess historic cultural areas that may be lost. Participants also emphasized the dynamic nature of the landscape and noted prescribed burns had long been used in the Willamette Valley to retain oak habitat and preserve traditional ways of life.

Participants noted the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation see climate change as a significant issue, with impacts to salmon being the most important. They are also curious about the possible benefits of climate change for tribes. Participants noted they had lost traditional knowledge by bringing in outside experts to assist on projects and emphasized the importance of supporting tribal members in their efforts to become experts on climate change and other issues.

Western Washington

Participants shared that the twenty members tribes of the NWIFC vary in their experience, knowledge, and amount of time dedicated to climate change. Participants observed that the common challenges associated with climate change are helping bring the tribes together. For example, there is renewed interest in developing a tribal climate change forum, an effort that has been underway in western Washington for many years. Participants explained that the lands of the NWIFC member tribes run from the Olympic Peninsula and Strait of Juan de Fuca to the Puget Sound and extend from high-elevation ecosystems down through freshwater aquatic ecosystems to the coast and ocean.

Participants explained that the Port Gamble S'Klallam Tribe is interested mostly in science and a reasonable range of projections for impacts on:

- Salmon (chum, coho, Chinook, sockeye)
- Sea level rise including nonlinear extreme events from Greenland to Antarctica such as ice field and glacial subsidence and calving
- Harmful algal blooms
- Shellfish impacts and ocean acidification
- Social science and population growth projections to connect with climate change assessments

Columbia River

Participants shared that the 15 tribes of the Columbia River Basin are working together on the renewal of the Columbia River Treaty. They are working to incorporate tribal perspectives and ecosystem function, including water management for fish populations, into the treaty.

Nevada

In the semi-arid environment common to Nevada tribes, participants observed that weather extremes are experienced more strongly. Participants noted many lakes are terminal and the tribes must depend on this water for their needs. For example, the Pyramid Lake Tribes are trying to maintain and support healthy traditional fish populations, specifically cutthroat trout and cui-ui. Participants also noted evaporation and associated changes in water chemistry are a major concern. For example, other lakes have grown so saline that they are no longer viable for tribal uses.

Southcentral and Southeast Alaska

Participants explained that Alaska Natives are seeing marine life in their areas that had previously only been seen as far north as Oregon. For example, there are five new breeds of plankton that are poisonous. Participants also shared that there are sores on salmon and diseased pine trees. Ocean acidification and loss of glaciers are an issue, and the land is rising too. Overall, participants stated there is a need for additional tribal staff to address these changes.

Participants shared that 40,000 sockeye salmon died due to drought and low oxygen levels in the water in the Klawock tribal area. They explained escapement has been low in recent years, ranging from a few thousand recently to a few hundred this year. The community is struggling to subsist on far reduced salmon populations. In addition, participants noted that while the river is a sockeye salmon river, there is a coho salmon hatchery on it which challenges the traditional way of life as a sockeye salmon people. To address the die-off and climate change, tribal staff are working with the schools on climate change education and watershed training. For example, they have a program to include youth in watershed testing.

Participants shared that Chugach area tribes live in the Prince William Sound area and would like to be more involved in climate change programs and activities. Participants noted tribes in this area are already observing impacts to salmon populations. For example, approximately half the salmon going up the Yukon River died recently. The cause is unclear but may have been due to increased water temperature and the *Ichthyophonus* spp. disease. Participants explained that in addition to the challenges posed by climate change, tribes are restricted on salmon take even though their historical use is a small portion of the total salmon population.

Participants noted that Bristol Bay-area native communities have seen extreme weather changes of up to 100 degrees in two days. They explained that such extremes are stressful for plants and animals on which the communities subsist. Extreme changes in the migratory patterns of culturally significant flora and fauna have also been observed. As a result, the regulations for migratory birds, which are based on historical migration patterns, are growing inaccurate. Native communities are working on a flexible harvest schedule to accommodate the changing migratory patterns. In addition, participants noted high wind and storm surge events are causing coastal erosion and flooding in river communities. Air quality is also becoming an issue due to tundra fire and forest fire, and visibility during drought periods is declining due to dust rising from unpaved gravel roads.

Participants stated Alaska Natives in the Bristol Bay-area have had to change their harvest and preservation methods and preferences in response to the climate impacts they are already facing. For example, shellfish are suffering from paralytic shellfish poisoning, which makes them toxic to humans. In response, communities are trying to adjust water quality parameters to test if the shellfish is safe to eat. In addition, participants noted the region's smelt populations typically overwinter beneath river ice, but when the river ice melted recently, the smelt migrated to lakes upriver. This concentrated the population and the community had a very large harvest. Participants explained that since there is no monitoring of smelt populations, it is unclear what impact the large harvest may have on the smelt population in the future. As a result, the community is working to manage their resources well.

Participants concluded by saying tribal staff in the Bristol Bay-area are considering a shift in their management to focus more on what solutions the community may have. The current focus is on capturing the changes the community is seeing.

United States

Participants noted the National Fish, Wildlife and Plants Climate Adaptation Strategy (Strategy) would have benefitted from a stronger tribal perspective. Although there has been little action on the Strategy, the last few years have been encouraging. Participants concluded that overall, tribal participation in U.S. federal climate change initiatives is improving but can still be better.

Recommendations for the NPLCC

The following summarizes the recommendations participants made to the NPLCC.

Convene Tribes and Support Tribal Coordination

- **Hold an annual NPLCC tribal meeting.** Participants stated one of the goals of an annual meeting would be to support a unified voice for tribes. The Tualip Tribes offered to host the 2015 meeting. They would also like to co-produce an article with the NPLCC about this meeting.
- **Support a tribal climate change forum.** Participants stated the forum would be open only to tribal leaders and staff. They noted one goal of the forum would be to support a unified voice

for tribes, similar to the NPLCC meeting above. Participants emphasized the forum would be distinct from the annual NPLCC tribal meeting described above, but may provide an opportunity to connect the NPLCC with tribal governance processes and with tribal leaders specifically. ATNI offered to assist with convening the forum.

- **Serve as a liaison between tribes and scientists working outside of tribes.** Participants noted this would help tribes provide feedback to scientists on research topics and approaches.

Continue to Support Funding for Tribes

- **Provide consistent, fair funding and support funding for climate change work.** Some participants suggested restructuring the NPLCC's existing approach to funding to ensure annual funding for new projects. Other participants suggested that tribes voice their support to budgetary decision makers for the NPLCC and other climate-aligned programs.
- **Continue to support ecosystem-based measures and protection and restoration of cultural resources.** Participants emphasized the importance of system-wide measures and continued support to protect and restore cultural resources.
- **Support on-the-ground projects.** Participants requested support for acting on the implications of vulnerability assessments, implementing adaptation strategies and plans, and for conducting projects on the land and water to prepare for and respond to current and projected climate change impacts.

Refine NPLCC Operations and Develop Products

- **Integrate and refine the policy language discussed during the meeting into the NPLCC mission, structure, and procedures.** For example, participants suggested incorporating the guidelines for considering traditional knowledges in climate change initiatives that are not yet integrated into the NPLCC's mission, structure, and procedures.
- **Develop quantitative measures of the impact of these meetings.** Participants explained that quantitative measures include measures of the return on investment of meetings. They noted current and future participants could use the quantitative measures in discussions with funders to convey why the meetings are important and why support for them should continue.
- **Develop a white paper on the NPLCC's approach to engaging Tribes and First Nations.** Participants noted the NPLCC is a leader in engaging Tribes and First Nations, especially their approach to data ownership and funding tribes directly. They suggested distributing the white paper broadly and using it to educate other LCCs, U.S. agencies, and similar entities on the NPLCC's approach.

Conclusion

Don Sampson thanked everyone for their participation and adjourned the meeting.

Appendix A. List of Attachments

1. Mankowski, John. Overview of the North Pacific LCC. Tribe/First Nation Committee. September 4, 2014. Available at https://nplcc.blob.core.windows.net/media/Default/Meeting_Documents/Tribes-9-04-14/Attachment1_JMankowski_NPLCC%20Tribe_FN_Meeting%20Portland%20Final.pdf (accessed December 24, 2014).
2. Hardison, Preston. Traditional Knowledges Guidelines. Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) and Risk and Opportunity Assessment for Engagement with TKs Holders. September 4, 2014. Portland, Oregon. Available at https://nplcc.blob.core.windows.net/media/Default/Meeting_Documents/Tribes-9-04-14/Attachment2_Hardison%20TKs%20Guidelines%20NPLCC%20September%202014.pdf (accessed December 24, 2014).
3. Climate and Traditional Knowledges Workgroup (CTKW). 2014. Guidelines for Considering Traditional Knowledges in Climate Change Initiatives. Available at <http://climatetkw.wordpress.com> (accessed October 3, 2014).