



ICARP

INTEGRATED CLIMATE ADAPTATION & RESILIENCY PROGRAM

Technical Advisory Council

Item 6: Climate Assessment Tribal Program

November 17, 2023

Overview

Indigenous peoples are on the frontlines of climate change exposure and adaptation. California's Fourth Climate Assessment began to explore this connection and demonstrated that California Native American tribes (Tribes) are actively managing climate change with innovative strategies. The [Fourth Assessment's Report, Tribal and Indigenous Communities within California](#), charged us to continue building on this effort, stating, "this report is the beginning of something truly innovative: a mutual invitation between tribes and the state to share learning with an urgent focus on climate action, incorporating traditional knowledges and practices. This synthesis is the starting point of a new productive climate conversation between tribes and the state". Through the Fifth Climate Assessment Tribal Research Program, OPR is partnering with tribes to meaningfully collaborate on Indigenous Knowledge (IK) and Tribal Expertise, including Western science, within the framework of the Assessment and support tribally led climate change research initiatives.

The Tribal Research Program is a new program within California's Climate Change Assessment (Assessment), established by [Senate Bill 1320](#) (Stern, 2020), and aims to:

- **Strengthen partnerships** with Tribes through early, often, and meaningful **engagement and consultation**,
- Establish a **Tribal Advisory Group (TAG)** to ensure collaboration on Indigenous knowledge and tribal expertise throughout the Assessment,
- Support tribally led research through a **Tribal Grant Program** to address California-specific tribal research needs and tribally led, local climate assessments,
- Develop a **Tribal and Indigenous Communities Report** that includes tribally led research and summarizes climate change impacts to tribes in California, and
- Collaborate with Tribes to develop tribally led **Guidance on Collaboration and Protection of Indigenous Knowledge and Tribal Expertise** through research processes and report handling.

Engagement and Consultation

ICARP is committed to a dedicated, sustained, and meaningful tribal engagement process to include government to government consultation, listening sessions, workshops, and attending existing tribal workshops to meet tribes where they are. From June 2022 – October 2023 staff have:

- Held 8 Tribal Workshops and/or listening sessions.
- Presented at 20 different tribal workgroups and conferences (such as RTOC, MLSTEP, etc.).
- Consulted with seven tribes, all who have decided to keep consultation open as we progress through our processes.
- Received and applied over 150 specific comments on the various components of the Tribal Research Program.
- Held four office hours to provide more in-depth technical assistance on the Grant Program.
- Distributed surveys and reviewed responses to identify topic priorities and gaps specific to Tribes.
- Held dozens of direct conversations with tribes and tribal serving organizations to better understand tribal needs around climate change.
- Partnered with Tribes and tribal serving organizations to co-host multiple, in-person Regional Workshops to inform the scope of the Assessment's Regional Reports.

Tribal Advisory Group

The inaugural Tribal Advisory Group is diverse, passionate, and experienced and will play a critical role in California's Fifth Climate Change Assessment (Assessment), a multi-year research effort to identify ways climate change is impacting California's diverse communities and ways to adapt to those impacts. The Tribal Advisory Group will guide the Assessment's Tribal Research Program and other components of the Assessment to ensure the Assessment will be meaningful to tribal communities and support their work for climate resilience.

OPR recognizes that while there are similarities among tribal communities, California Native American Tribes are not monolithic; rather, each tribal nation has a unique history as well as distinct cultural, spiritual, and political structures. OPR staff intend for the members of the Group to represent diversity in age, culture, and geographic region, to be affiliated with federally and non-federally recognized tribes, and to collectively hold expertise on a variety of Fifth Assessment topics. Each member is a member at large and does not represent a specific Tribe. While the Tribal Advisory Group will chart the course of the Tribal Research Program, OPR's Fifth Assessment team will also continue with other tribal engagement such as Consultations and listening sessions.

Tribal Research Grant Program

The California Energy Commission, in close collaboration with OPR, is administering the [Tribal Research Grant Program](#), which will fund tribally led climate change research, assessments, and similar projects deemed a priority by the applying tribe. This includes projects that have an Indigenous Knowledge focus, which has been historically underfunded in climate initiatives, as well as Western science approaches, and the collaboration of the two knowledge systems. The program will accommodate a diversity of geographies, environments, project types, and climate impacts with tribal governments and

tribal communities. The results of projects funded under this solicitation are encouraged, but not required, to contribute to the Fifth California Climate Change Assessment. [Grant Applications](#) are now being accepted through **November 17, 2023**.

Tribal and Indigenous Communities Report

The Topical Synthesis Reports, including the Tribal Report, will spotlight research and informational resources on issues of statewide significance, focusing on climate change impacts and risks in California as well as opportunities to build adaptation capacity and resilience to those impacts.

The Tribal report itself will not generate completely new research but will synthesize existing research and communicate it in a way that is useful, beneficial, and meaningful for its intended audience. We are currently engaging with the Tribal Advisory Group to form the framework for this effort. Staff will continue engagement and consultation on this effort. Our goal is to have a Scope of Work developed late Fall 2023 and author teams to begin forming in late Winter/early Spring 2024. **We are currently recruiting for a Coordinating Lead for this Report.**

Indigenous Knowledge Guidelines and Protocol

California's Climate Change Assessment recognizes the significance that Tribal Communities, Indigenous Knowledge, and Tribal Expertise plays in understanding and responding to climate change. However, there is a lack of State understanding of, and potential risks to, Indigenous peoples in sharing Indigenous Knowledge in State and other non-indigenous climate change initiatives. These are deep-rooted from the fraught history the State has with California Native Americans including historic violence, exploitation, dispossession, and the attempted destruction of tribal communities, as recognized by Governor Newsom's apology in [Executive Order N-15-19](#).

Current engagement efforts are informing a tribally developed guidance document that the Assessment will use, and other State Agencies can use, to better understand 1) Indigenous Knowledge; 2) developing meaningful partnerships with Tribes and 3) protocols and handling of knowledge and/or data when collaborating with Tribes on Indigenous Knowledge, Tribal Expertise, and Tribal Data. OPR's leadership on this project is also recognized in the Department of Water Resources 2023 Water Plan. We will be developing a Scope of Work Fall 2023 for this project with work commencing in January 2024.

Discussion Questions

- From your perspective and your work, what is the most challenging factor or barrier to meaningfully collaborate with tribes on Indigenous Knowledge and Tribal Expertise within the context of climate change research and resilience efforts? What resources would help address those barriers?

Appendix A: Tribal Advisory Group Members

Tiana Williams-Claussen Yurok Tribe Wildlife Department Director

Tribal Affiliation: Yurok Nation

Nominating Tribe: Yurok Tribe

Raymond Gutteriez Eco-Cultural Ecologist

Tribal Affiliation: Wuksachi Indian Tribe

Nominating Tribe: Wuksachi Indian Tribe

Connor Magee Research and Data Application Manager, Climate Science Alliance

Tribal Affiliation: Pala Band of Mission Indians (Payomkawichum/Cahuilla)

Nominating Tribe: Pala Band of Mission Indians

Christina McDonald North Fork Rancheria of Mono Indians Vice Chairperson

Tribal Affiliation: North Fork Rancheria of Mono Indians

Nominating Tribe: North Fork Rancheria of Mono Indians

“Yaan Yaan Eesh” Micklin Chief Executive Office, Ewiiapaayp Band of Kumeyaay Indians

Tribal Affiliation: Tlingit & Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska, Cangukeidi (Wolf moiety), Teikweidi Clan, Kaats Hit (House of Kaats the man who married the bear), Tantakwaan (Tongass Tribe)

Nominating Tribe: Ewiiapaayp Band of Kumeyaay Indians

Teresa Romero Tribal Member

Tribal Affiliation: Coastal Band of Chumash Nation

Nominating Tribe: Coastal Band of Chumash

Michael Shaver Water Resources Manager

Nominating Tribe: Potter Valley Tribe

Dean Tonenna Vice President, Mono Lake Kootzaduka’a Indian Community Cultural

Preservation Association, Botanist/Ethnobotanist/Tribal Elder and Kootzaduka’a

Traditionalist

Tribal Affiliation: Mono Lake Kootzaduka’a

Nominating Tribe: Mono Lake Kootzaduka’a

Appendix B: Timeline

