Elevating Ancestral Practices: A Tribal Wellness in Climate Adaptation Planning Summary

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Welcome

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Overview of Session and Background

15 total participants from 10 communities

Notable events in and around Alaska, 2014–2019

Key partner: Aleutian Pribilof Islands Association
Training Topics

- Mapping Observations of Change and Feelings
- Climate Change, Health, and Wellness: Understanding the Impacts on Indigenous Communities
- Planting the Seeds: The Influence of Culture on Resilience, Hope, and Wellness
- Community Resilience through Tradition
- Climate Projections - What’s Happening in Alaska and the Arctic?
We have Feelings about the Change

Unpredictable
Loss of world/land of color
Concerned about lack of resources
What will happen to future generations?
Hardship
Protective of what is left
Inspired
Eager to protect
Lack of support
Need to hold on to memories, what was
Realization that all things are precious
Survival instinct
Focus on future and moving forward
Anxiety
Resignation
Need to keep learning and cultural traditions alive

Reflection
Exhilarating
Loss of cultural connections/knowledge
Devastated
Loss of wonder/naivety
Sadness
Shocking
Want to contribute
Numb
Frustration
Scared
Uncertain: About raising family, What will it be like in 30 years?
Need to understand science and traditional knowledge
Uneasy
Loss Hopelessness
Climate Change, Health, and Wellness: Understanding the Impacts on Indigenous Communities

- Integrating health into climate planning: Pala Band of Mission Indians, San Diego County, California
  - Health vulnerabilities
  - Adaptation strategies to protect health
- Physical, mental, emotional, spiritual, social, and cultural health
Planting the Seeds: The Influence of Culture on Resilience, Hope, and Wellness

- Experiencing increased loss/change/stress with climate change
- Impacts collective wellness, cohesiveness, & decision making
- Wellness & resilience through Indigenous practices
- 5 C’s - Compassion, Connection, Community, Curiosity & Ceremony
Community Resilience through Tradition

We’ve Done this Before - Action over Anxiety:

- Climate Grief and Solastalgia are Psychological Trauma. Trauma occurs when you are not able to mitigate or cope with the stressor.
- Healing requires the reconstruction of systems based upon empowerment and restoration of relationships.

Traditional Migration stories recount difficult situations that could have been stories of historical trauma; however, are stories of resilience because they are based on Sovereignty. Taking back our story and healing through the process of being a good relative, a real human being.

Connection to community through caring for each other and through stewardship of land.
Climate Projections - The Science is Significant

"Because at my community is facing that issue now, and I can take this knowledge back to share."

"Brought science to the discussion."

"I love the fact that we had resources to draw from. Having access (through this workshop) to folks like Jeremy is paramount to my adaptation planning."

"Very impactful to see and hear what we are seeing in regards to climate change right here and now."

"It was great to have someone present climate science in a way that was accessible to us and he did a great job communicating."
Feedback - Where do we go from here?

“Our traditional knowledge is our guide.”

“Resilience & LET’S INVOLVE the Youth. They need to be in on this planning, including the understanding of the science and climate change and how traditional resilience can keep things alive.”

“[…] rather than just worry about climate change, we can take action through climate planning - be proactive and self-determine a vision for the future rather than reactive”

5 people mentioned having a follow-up training or a 3rd day
Steps Tribes Can Take

- Identify if any tribal health, wellness or cultural revitalization plans exist - expand to address climate issues
- Talk to community members about their concerns: local conversations
- Gather TK and explore how local practices can be strategies (ways to respond) to climate impacts
- Connect with other tribes and partner organizations, such as AK CASC or climate action groups

PLACES TO SEEK TRADITIONAL KNOWLEDGE

- Interview Elders
- Discussions at meetings and maqi (steambaths)
- Church
- Regional Associations that have documented traditional knowledge
- CDQ group
- Cultural activities
- Village and regional corporation projects
- Books that have historical information
- Tribal and missionary records of families
- Old school project interviews of Elders

- Museum and publications
- Cultural camp
- Hunters and gatherers
- Youth
- The Internet
- Home
- Tribal Offices
- Corporation
- City
- School
- Forming an Elders Group
- Tribal Chief
- Historians
Resources

- Wellness Training Summary Report
- Status of Tribes and Climate Change (STACC) Report - Ch. 5 Health and Wellbeing
- Planting the Seeds Handout
- Tribal Climate Health Project
- Swinomish Tribe (I-BRACE)
- Chemşhúun Peʼícháachuqeli (When our Hearts are Happy)
- Pala Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment
- Pala Climate Change Adaptation Plan
Announcements

- Tribal Consultation on Indigenous Traditional Ecological Knowledge in Federal Decision-Making - April 5th & April 29th
- Grants Symposium and Alaska Infrastructure Planning and Assistance - April 11th-12th, Anchorage Dena’ina Center
- 2022 National Traditional Ecological Knowledge Virtual Summit - May 10th-12th
- Forthcoming Larger Report - *Elevating Ancestral Practices: Tribal Wellness in Climate Adaptation Planning*
Questions, Discussion or Comments?

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Thank you!