



Project Title: [Pacific Northwest Tribal Climate Change Project](#)

Brief Summary (Abstract):

American Indian and Alaska Native tribes have contributed little to the causes of climate change, and yet face disproportionate risks. Tribes have unique rights, cultures, and economies that are, or could be, vulnerable to climate change impacts. For indigenous peoples, the environmental impacts of climate change and some of the proposed solutions threaten ways of life, subsistence, lands rights, future growth, cultural survivability, and financial resources.

The Tribal Climate Change Project is a collaborative project between the University of Oregon Environmental Studies Program and the USDA Forest Service Pacific Northwest Research Station. The project focuses on understanding and communicating the impacts of climate change on tribal sovereignty and culture through research, resource development, and facilitation of the [Pacific Northwest Tribal Climate Change Network](#).

Project Location: Eugene, Oregon

Partners: Tribes in the Pacific Northwest and beyond; intertribal organizations including the Columbia Intertribal Fish Commission, Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission, Intertribal Timber Council; public agencies and coalitions such as the Northwest Climate Science Center, the North Pacific and Great Northern Landscape Conservation Cooperatives, the Oregon Climate Change Research Institute; non-governmental organizations and others working with tribes on climate change issues in the region.

Background: The Tribal Climate Change Project is a collaborative project between the University of Oregon Environmental Studies Program and the USDA Forest Service Pacific Northwest Research Station. The project focuses on understanding needs and opportunities for tribes in addressing climate change, examining the government-to-government relationship in a climate context and exploring the role of traditional knowledge in climate change studies, assessments and plans.

This project is part of the USDA Forest Service 2010 Coordinated Approach to Tribal Climate Change Research. Other Forest Service Research Stations engaged in this type of research include the Forest Service Rocky Mountain Research Station and the Forest Service Northern Research Station.

Project Goals: In relationship to Goal 6: Increase awareness and motivate action to safeguard fish, wildlife, and plants in a changing climate, the PNW Tribal Climate Change Project is conducting research and developing resources intended to support tribal efforts focused on identifying climate change impacts to culturally-important species, and planning for any changes in the quantity, distribution or timing of those species.

The PNW Tribal Climate Change Project is currently focused on research that explores the impacts of climate change on tribal sovereignty and strategies to strengthen the government-to-government



relationship in the context of climate change, as well as research related to the role of and protections needed for bridging traditional knowledge in climate change initiatives.

Resources include development of profiles featuring the innovative approaches of tribes across the United States addressing climate change through adaptation and mitigation strategies. The Tribal Climate Change Profiles are intended to be a pathway to increasing knowledge among tribal and non-tribal organizations interested in learning about climate change mitigation and adaptation efforts. Profile examples include:

- [Jamestown S’Klallam Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment and Adaptation Plan](#)
- [Vulnerability of Coastal Louisiana Tribes in a Climate Change Context](#)
- [Siletz Tribal Energy Program](#)
- [Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes: Climate Change Strategic Plan](#)

Through the Pacific Northwest Tribal Climate Change Network, we facilitate the exchange of information about policies, programs, grant resources, and other information that may be of interest to tribes engaging in climate change resources. At the same time, conversations during our monthly conference calls provide an opportunity for tribes to voice ideas, concerns and strategies to improve tribal engagement in federal climate change initiatives.

In 2013, partners involved with the PNW Tribal Climate Change Project contributed to articles in a special issue of the journal *Climatic Change: Climate Change and Indigenous Peoples in the United States: Impacts, Experiences and Actions*. The journal explores issues currently experienced by indigenous communities in the U.S. due to climate change, including loss of traditional knowledge, forests and ecosystems, food security and traditional foods, and water, Arctic sea ice loss, permafrost thaw, and relocation. The journal also highlights how tribal communities and programs are responding to the changing environments. Visit: <http://link.springer.com/journal/10584/120/3/page/1>

For more information about the PNW Tribal Climate Change Project, visit:

<http://tribalclimate.uoregon.edu> or email project director, Kathy Lynn, at kathy@uoregon.edu.