

Karuk Climate Adaptation Plan

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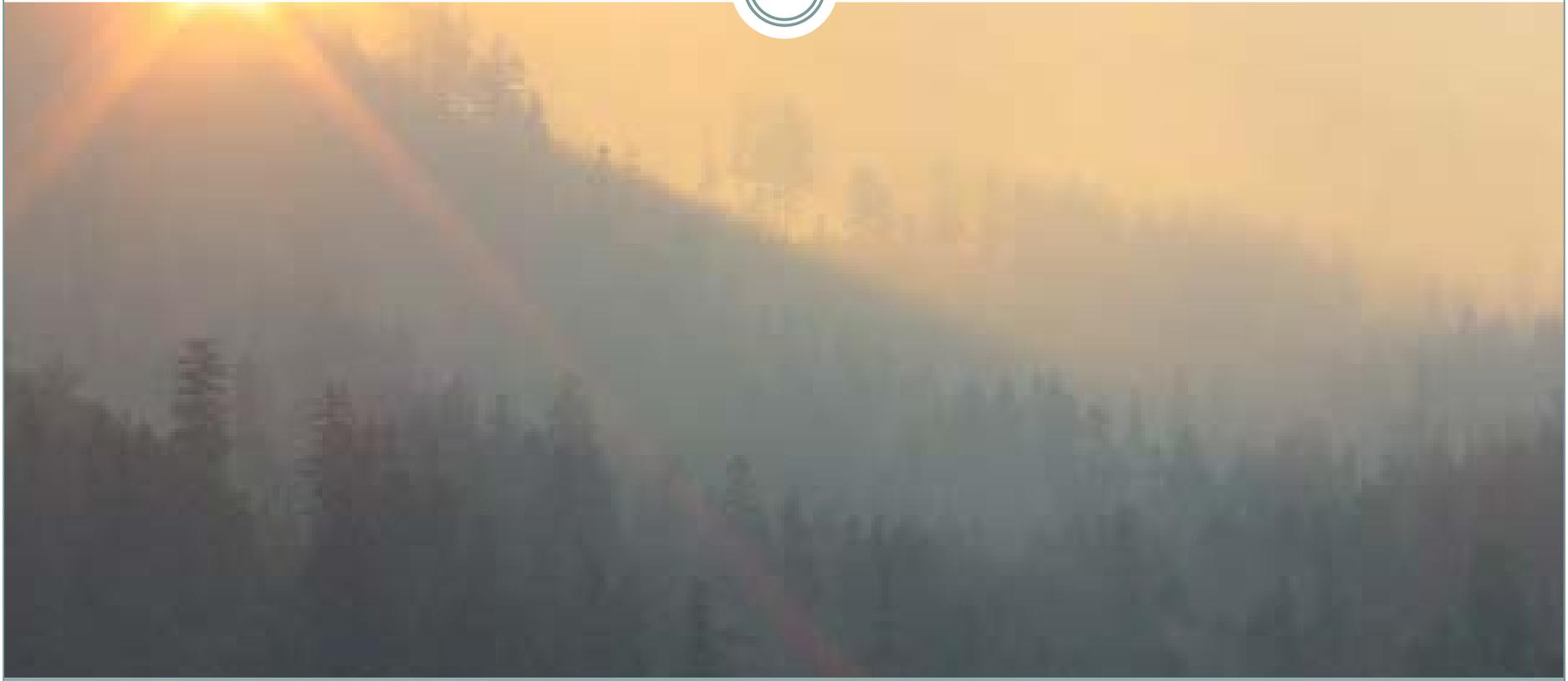


Photo by Will Harling

I. History/Context

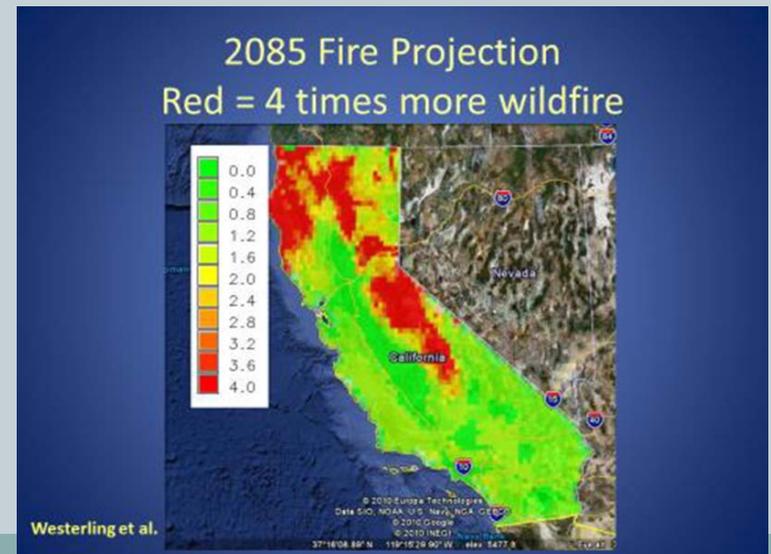


- Karuk Ancestral Territory covers 1.38 million acres in northern California.
- Ancestral Karuk people resided in more than 100 village sites along the Klamath and Salmon Rivers and tributaries
- Karuk environmental management practices supported resilient landscapes and a thriving subsistence economy
- Today, the Karuk Department of Natural Resources works in accordance with its mission *to protect, enhance and restore the cultural/natural resources and ecological processes upon which Karuk people depend.*



Mid-Klamath: Land Management and Climate Change

- Fire has been a central component of Karuk land stewardship and culture since time immemorial, used for tending, burning, and ceremony.
 - More than $\frac{3}{4}$ of Karuk traditional food and cultural use species are enhanced by fire
- Extractive resource-reliant economies, more than a century of fire suppression policies, and climate change considerations have resulted in a particular and immediate threat of increased fire intensity and severity in the Klamath region (Stephens et al 2014; Redsteer et al 2013)



Impacts:

- Creates denied access to traditional foods and spiritual practices
- Infringes upon political sovereignty
- Puts cultural identity at risk



Huckleberries burning, October 2015. Photo: Klamath-Salmon Media Collaborative

- Karuk adaptation to climate change is often impaired by the actions of other agencies who interfere with tribal management authority and fail to recognize sovereignty.
- For more than a decade, the Tribe has been engaging in a wide variety of adaptation strategies. These include legal and political efforts to restore management, collaboration with agencies, the non-native community, academics, public education with reference to fire (e.g. recent media), proactive planning, and research.



II. Karuk Climate Change Initiative



- Karuk people have responsibilities to tend to and care for the food and cultural use species they consider as relations
- The Karuk Department of Natural Resources has taken a proactive and leading role in developing climate research on the Mid-Klamath
 - 2016 Karuk Climate Vulnerability Assessment
 - Western Klamath Restoration Partnership (WGRP)
 - Awarded 2017 PG&E Community Resilience Grant focused on wildfire protection
 - ✦ Objective within this proposal will support an additional chapter on critical infrastructure to include in final Karuk Climate Adaptation Plan



Secure | <https://lostcoastoutpost.com/2017/sep/27/karuk-tribe-picks-100000-pge-climate-change-grant/>

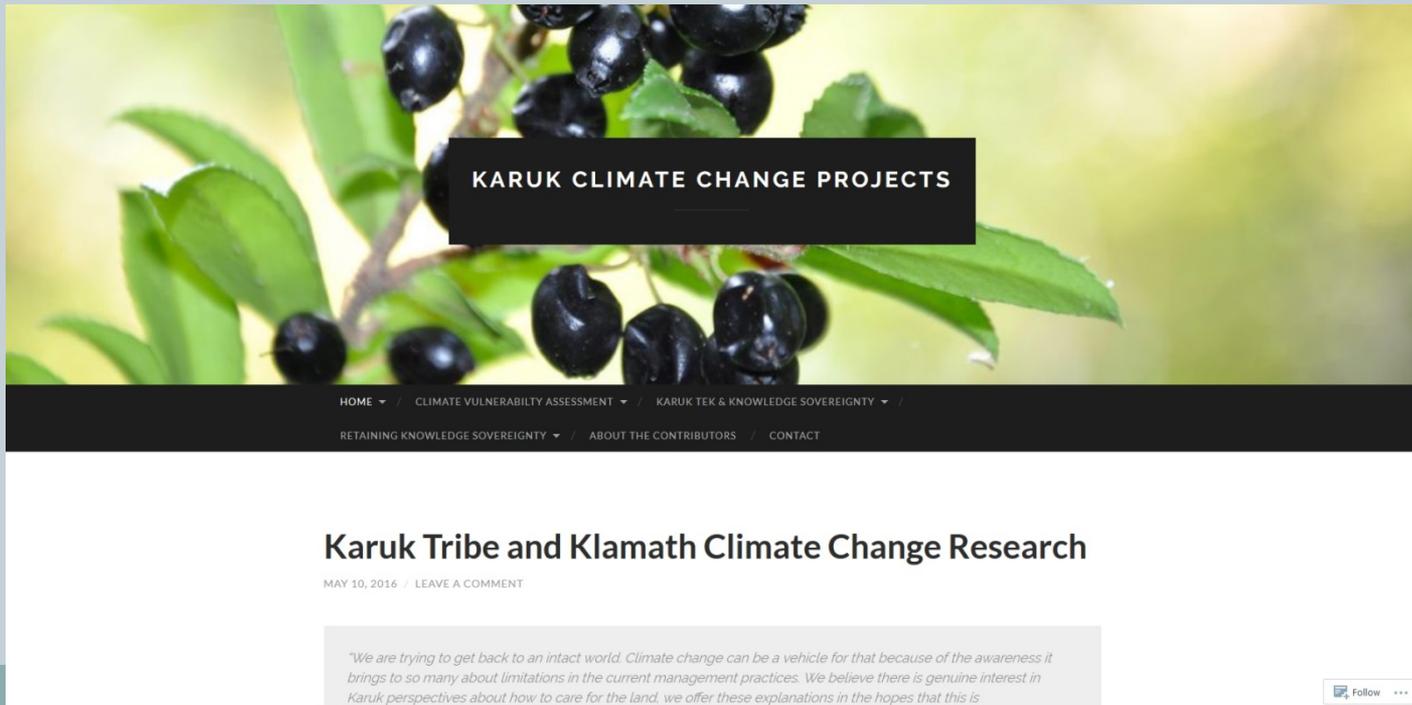
HANK SIMS / WEDNESDAY, SEPT. 27 @ 3:49 P.M. / ENVIRONMENT

Karuk Tribe Picks Up \$100k PG&E Climate Change Grant to Fund Traditional, Prescribed-Burn Forest Management

Resources



- **Karuk Tribe Climate Change Projects** (URL: <https://karuktribeclimatechangeprojects.wordpress.com/>)
 - Final 2016 Climate Vulnerability Assessment available online as a PDF
 - 2016 CVA will be updated to include findings from current DOE project



III. DOE – Karuk Climate Adaptation Plan



Objectives

1. **Create a Climate Adaptation Plan** for the Karuk Tribe
2. **Refine Karuk Department of Natural Resources' Strategic Plan** in light of information presented by the Karuk Climate Adaptation Plan

Methodology

Vulnerabilities are assessed at three scales:

1. Vulnerabilities to Karuk tribal traditional foods and cultural use species
2. Vulnerabilities to tribal program infrastructure
3. Vulnerabilities to management authority and political status.

Project Partners



1. University of Oregon

- Dr. Kari Norgaard (Associate Professor, University of Oregon Sociology and Environmental Studies Departments)
- Aja Conrad (Karuk MA student, UO Environmental Studies)
- Kirsten Vinyeta (PhD candidate, UO Environmental Studies)

2. The Western Klamath Restoration Partnership

Project Activities/Outcomes:



Beginning steps:

- Review adaptation planning documents, scientific literature on climate change, and obstacles to adaptation for tribes
- Compile information on climate stressors that intersect with fire, especially in relation to species, program infrastructure and management authority.
- UO project team members held initial meeting.

Outcomes:

1. Publication of a collaboratively developed, fire-focused Climate Adaptation Plan
2. Revised version of our existing DNR Strategic Plan with integration of project findings

IV. Looking Forward

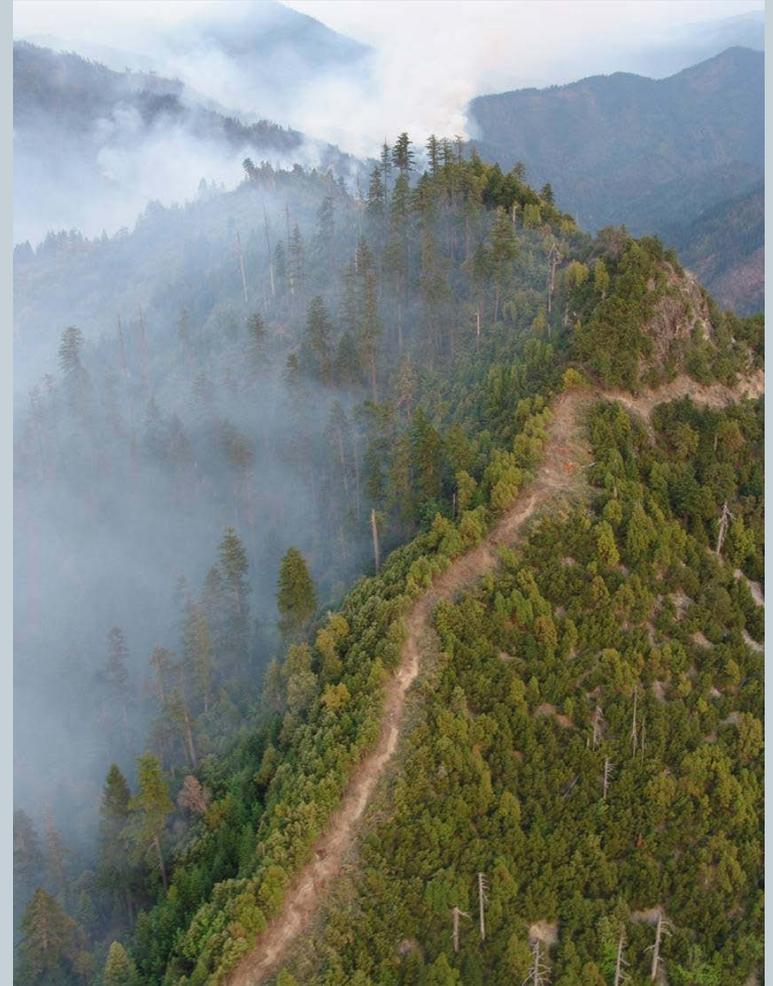


Project Benefits:

- **Community impact** through education, media outreach, and presentations.
- Climate Adaptation Plan will serve Tribal programs and enable the Karuk DNR to engage in and **inform high-level land management planning** for multiple resource objectives.
- **Supports key partnerships** with academic, federal, tribal, and non-profit partners.
- **Leverages funds** and technical support.
- **Serves multiple tribes** in the Mid-Klamath.

Next steps:

- Expanding 2016 CVA to include multiple indicators of climate change (e.g., changing patterns of temperature and precipitation).



Additional Resources:



- Norgaard, K. M. 2014. Social Impacts of Fire Exclusion *Humboldt Journal of Social Relations*, 39: 73-97
- Two Reports on Climate Change, Traditional Ecological Knowledge, and the need for knowledge sovereignty
 - Part I “Karuk Traditional Ecological Knowledge and the Need for Knowledge Sovereignty: Social, Cultural and Economic Impacts of Denied Access to Traditional Management.” 2013
 - Part II “Retaining Knowledge Sovereignty: Practical Steps Towards Expanding the Application of Karuk Traditional Knowledge in the Face of Climate Change” 2014