

2019 NORTHWEST SCIENTIFIC ASSOCIATION SPECIAL SESSION ON NORTHWEST NATIVE FOODS

Panel on: tribal perspectives, recommendations, and research needs for promoting tribal food sovereignty and responsible management of traditional foods and places

March 28th, 2019, a special session on Northwest Native Foods was held at the Annual Meeting of the Northwest Scientific Association in Lewiston, Idaho. The special session was co-coordinated by Monique Wynecoop, Pit River/Maidu, Fire Ecologist, USDA Colville National Forest and Connie Harrington, Research Forester USDA Pacific Northwest Research Station. The session included 11 talks (abstracts included at: www.northwestscience.org). At the end of the session, a panel of tribal researchers and natural/cultural resource specialists discussed tribal perspectives, recommendations, and research needs for promoting tribal food sovereignty and responsible management of traditional foods and places. There was interactive discussion and feedback from the audience as well.

Recommendations for non-tribal agencies on how to respectfully co-manage cultural resources with tribes

- ◇ We need more native leaders assisting other agencies with this task.
- ◇ *Respect is key.*
- ◇ Don't assume all tribes are the same: Do your homework on culture, history, and treaties prior to consultation or collaboration.
- ◇ Timing is key: bring tribes in to a project planning process as soon as possible, not after the fact. This helps to build transparency, community, and relationships.
- ◇ Tribal people need to educate scientists on our perspectives and worldview.
- ◇ Traditional Knowledge is science.
- ◇ Start the conversation with cultural values of the tribal community and rules and responsibilities.
- ◇ Work needs to be done on both sides to get us all on the same page and working together.
- ◇ Give proper credit to tribal people when working on joint projects. Native people or tribes must be listed as co-authors and/or given proper acknowledgement in all projects.
- ◇ Tribal people are focused on benefitting future generations, and other agencies need to be on the same track.



Figure 1. Pictured panel Members (see complete panel list next page) from left to right: **Mark Stanger**, Schitsu'umsh Culture Advisor/Education/Outreach Specialist; **Ciarra Greene**, Nimiipuu (Nez Perce) Native Environmental Science Faculty at Northwest Indian College- Nez Perce Site; **Nicholas Kager**, Schitsu'umsh (Coeur d'Alene) Deputy Tribal Historic Preservation Officer; **Sammy Matsaw**, Shoshone/Bannock & Oglala Lakota, First Foods Ecologist/Water Resources Department, University of Idaho; **Jill Wagner**, Schitsu'umsh (Coeur d'Alene) Tribal Historic Preservation Officer. Photo by Bill Carlson

Research or management needs in the area of tribal food sovereignty

- ◇ Funding and workforce capacity are some of the top needs in Indian country.
- ◇ Interdisciplinary work is necessary but very challenging, especially when it comes to acquiring funding.
- ◇ Co-management on private land is a huge challenge—putting money into projects on non-tribal land often benefits the landowner financially but not the tribe.
- ◇ Explore the stereotype of what is considered “traditional” and how it often limits funding towards those things and hinders the development of new solutions to modern day problems.
- ◇ Explore new ways to develop food sovereignty within tribal ancestral lands, and not just on the reservations.
- ◇ Less micromanaging of money would allow tribal programs to be more innovative in the ways they can utilize funding within projects.
- ◇ More education is needed for the general public and non-tribal agencies about non-treaty tribes and how those tribes still have ancestral knowledge and uses on the lands.
- ◇ Look into access and past, present, and future management of the land and how it could affect the health of tribal people that are going back to a subsistence-based diet. For example, land owners or resource managers need to communicate pesticide or hazardous chemical use within gathering locations to prevent future health problems for those that gather food or materials in the area.

- ◇ More education and re-assertion of tribal ancestral homelands on the national, regional, and local level
- ◇ Explore partnerships and agreements that can increase access to public lands for traditional gathering.
- ◇ We need researchers to look at how we develop EPA standards for traditional subsistence diets typical of native people and to help develop new and safer guidelines for native people.
- ◇ We need to help share our story and culture related to the use of pesticides and herbicides and how they damage the spirit of the plant.

Ways culture and language tie into the sustainable management of native foods

- ◇ Language means everything.
- ◇ “If language is lost, go back to the land” -Schitsu'umsh (Coeur d’Alene) elder quote shared by Nicholas Kager
- ◇ Our language tells the story of the land. Our native language describes places as verbs, whereas the European language describes places as nouns.
- ◇ Our treaties keep us strong, yet many people in this country aren’t even aware of the treaties of the local tribes of their area, or the importance of them.
- ◇ We would like to see more signs on and off the reservation that show names for places in the native language
- ◇ Regulations need to happen to protect the resources we depend on and we all need to step together to solve these problems. This is the responsibility of the whole world.

Special Session Presenters

Serra Hoagland, Pueblo of Laguna, Rocky Mountain Research Station Fire Lab and Salish Kootenai College; **Nicholas Kager**, Schitsu'umsh Deputy Tribal Historic Preservation Officer; **Jill Wagner**, Schitsu'umsh Tribal Historic Preservation Officer; **Nikanot Sylvia Tatshama Peasley**, Confederated Colville Tribes Cultural Plant Specialist; **Pendleton Moses**, Confederated Colville Tribes Cultural Plant Specialist; **Connie Harrington**, Research Forester, Pacific Northwest Research Station; **Monique Wynecoop**, Fire Ecologist, Colville National Forest, USDA; **Kathryn Matthews**, Nez Perce National Historic Park, National Park Service; **Sammy Matsaw**, Shoshone/Bannock and Oglala Lakota, First Foods Ecologist/Water Resources Department, University of Idaho

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Mark Stanger, Schitsu'umsh (Coeur d’Alene) Culture Advisor/Education/Outreach Specialist; **Ciarra Greene**, Nimiipuu (Nez Perce) Native Environmental Science Faculty at Northwest Indian College, Nez Perce Site; **Nicholas Kager**, Schitsu'umsh (Coeur d’Alene) Deputy Tribal Historic Preservation Officer; **Sammy Matsaw**, Shoshone/Bannock & Oglala Lakota, First Foods Ecologist/Water Resources Department, University of Idaho; **Jill Wagner**, Schitsu'umsh (Coeur d’Alene) Tribal Historic Preservation Officer.

Moderator/Summary Author: **Monique Wynecoop**, Pit River/Maidu, Fire Ecologist, Colville National Forest