Tribal Leadership in Marine Protection for the North Coast
a Wiyot Tribe Perspective

Wiyot Tribe Environmental Department
Lughurrük, Shou’r Haloulilh (those who take care of the water and land)
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Wiyot Tribe

• Federally Recognized
• Pre-contact population ~2000, which dropped to ~100 by 1910
• Unlawfully terminated under the California Rancheria Act of 1958. Successfully sued the Federal Government for re-recognition and regained its status in 1981
• Currently ~630 citizens, about 120 of whom live on Table Bluff Reservation on South Humboldt Bay

Chief Ki-we-lat-tah
Wiyot Ancestral Territory

- Approximately 0.02% of ancestral territory under current Wiyot Tribal ownership.
- This land had to be purchased.
MPAs in Wiyot Ancestral Territory

Samoa SMCA
South Humboldt Bay SMRMA
Ongoing Tradition of Marine Harvesting
Wiyot Tribe
Environmental Department
Established 1996
Almost entirely grant-funded through US EPA allocations and various competitive grants
Mission is to monitor and protect the environmental resources of the Table Bluff Reservation, Wiyot Tribal Landholdings, and the Wiyot Aboriginal Territory
Responsibilities

- Tuluwat (Indian Island) Restoration
- Eel River Restoration
- EPA Clean Water Act Water Monitoring
- Solid Waste Management
- Renewable Energy/Energy Efficiency
- Environmental Education
- Community Garden
- Water/Waste Water Infrastructure
- Consultation and Coordination
- Wetlands Management
- “Other Duties As Assigned”
MLPA Involvement
MLPA Involvement

- Participated in North Coast Tribal Coalition and Tri-County Initiative
- Nominated to RSG but not appointed
- Served on SAT Tribal Workgroup
- Attended and participated in most RSG, SAT, and BRTF meetings
- Member of collaborative Estuarine Monitoring Group with HSU and Humboldt Harbor District, and Smith River Socio-cultural Baseline Framework
Perspectives
Perspectives

• Opportunity missed for real Tribal collaboration at the onset
  – (Because no co-management agreement reached, South Humboldt Bay SMRMA much smaller, Eel River MPA non-existent)

• Adversarial relationship developed

• Non-inclusion of Tribal scientists on SAT

• Slowly mutual cooperation (respect?) developed
Moving Forward
Moving Forward

• Tribes need to be treated as a modern political governments and scientific entities.
• TEK should be used for informing management decisions
• Need to develop real and meaningful co-management agreements
In conclusion ...
We are soon approaching the culmination of the beginning of the next phase of an ongoing process

Čawokš (Thank You)