

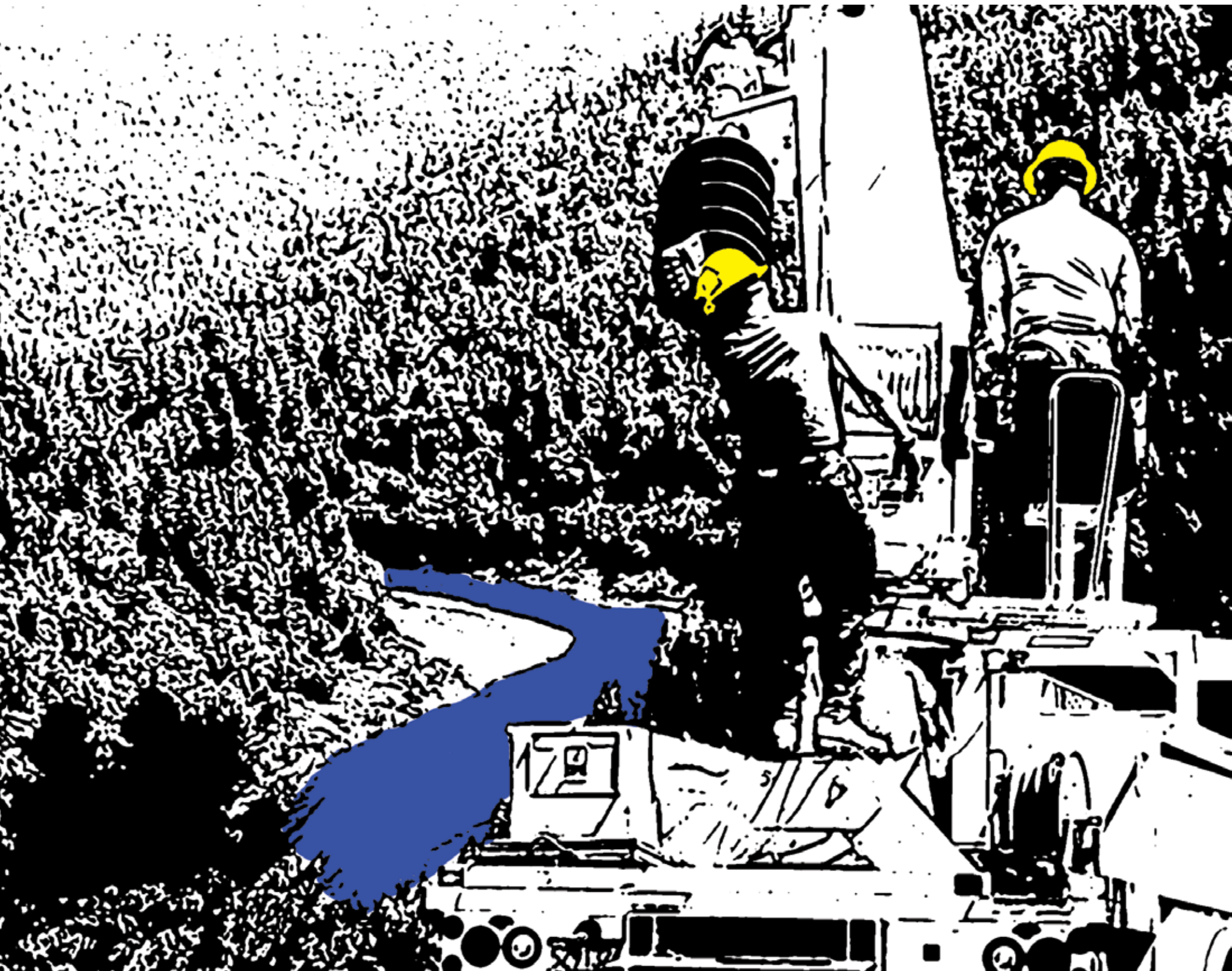


# Yurok Today

The Voice of the Yurok People

## POWER TO THE PEOPLE

Tribe secures funding to electrify family houses, government buildings and schools. See Story on Page 2



# Electricity coming to Wautec area

The Yurok Tribe recently received additional funding to bring electricity all the way to Wautec.

Thanks to a new \$4.9 million dollar grant from USDA Rural Utility Service, Jack Norton Elementary will no longer have to depend on a disruptive, unreliable and costly generators. The Wautec Fire Station, the Yurok tribal police office, two community water systems and two churches will for the first time have grid electrical power. This critical funding will also provide access to electricity to many of the homes that are still without electricity on the upper Reservation.

“Everyone should have access to electricity,” said Yurok Planning and Community Development Director Peggy O’Neill. “I am happy to say we are nearing the finish line on a project that has been a long time in the making. We have had several obstacles placed in front of us, but we have persevered thanks primarily to the strong motivation of Yurok Planner Mandy Mager who has managed this project for the Yurok Planning Department. Also, having the USDA Rural

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“EVERYONE SHOULD HAVE ACCESS TO ELECTRICITY.”

*Peggy O’Neill ~ Yurok Planning Director*

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Utility Service as a strong supporter of our project has been a critical motivator to keep us going on the project.”

There will be 6.8 miles of power line installed from Ryerson Ranch to the Wautec Village.

It is not profitable for Pacific Gas & Electric to build infrastructure in such a rural area, so the Tribe has taken the initiative to find funding to provide these services.

Currently, Yurok families without grid electrical power depend on a combination of expensive alternatives to electrify their homes. Some use solar and small hydro systems in tandem with generators, solar panels, propane, wood and kerosene. Virtually none of the families have power 24-hours a day. These small systems do not produce enough electricity to run multiple appliances, like a stove, refrigerator, heater and lights simultaneously. Running a microwave or a washing machine and dryer, both high-energy consumptive devices, are simply out of the question. Day-to-day tasks that many take for granted, such as cooking and refrigerating food, are exorbitantly more costly. In hard times, many families have to go without electricity when the cost of diesel or propane is too high or they have to make the difficult choice between food or electricity. For elders, it is even more difficult to cook and heat their homes because they are on limited incomes and do not have the finances or technical capability of maintaining hydro and solar systems.

The lack of access to power also severely limits economic development, which keeps tribal members from living on the

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## On The Cover

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The Yurok Tribe received funding to provide electricity over the remainder of the Reservation.





“Do you know how hard it is to get a signature from someone in solitary confinement?” asked Yurok Planner Mandy Mager. “It’s difficult, but we weren’t going to let any hurdle get in the way of finishing this project.”

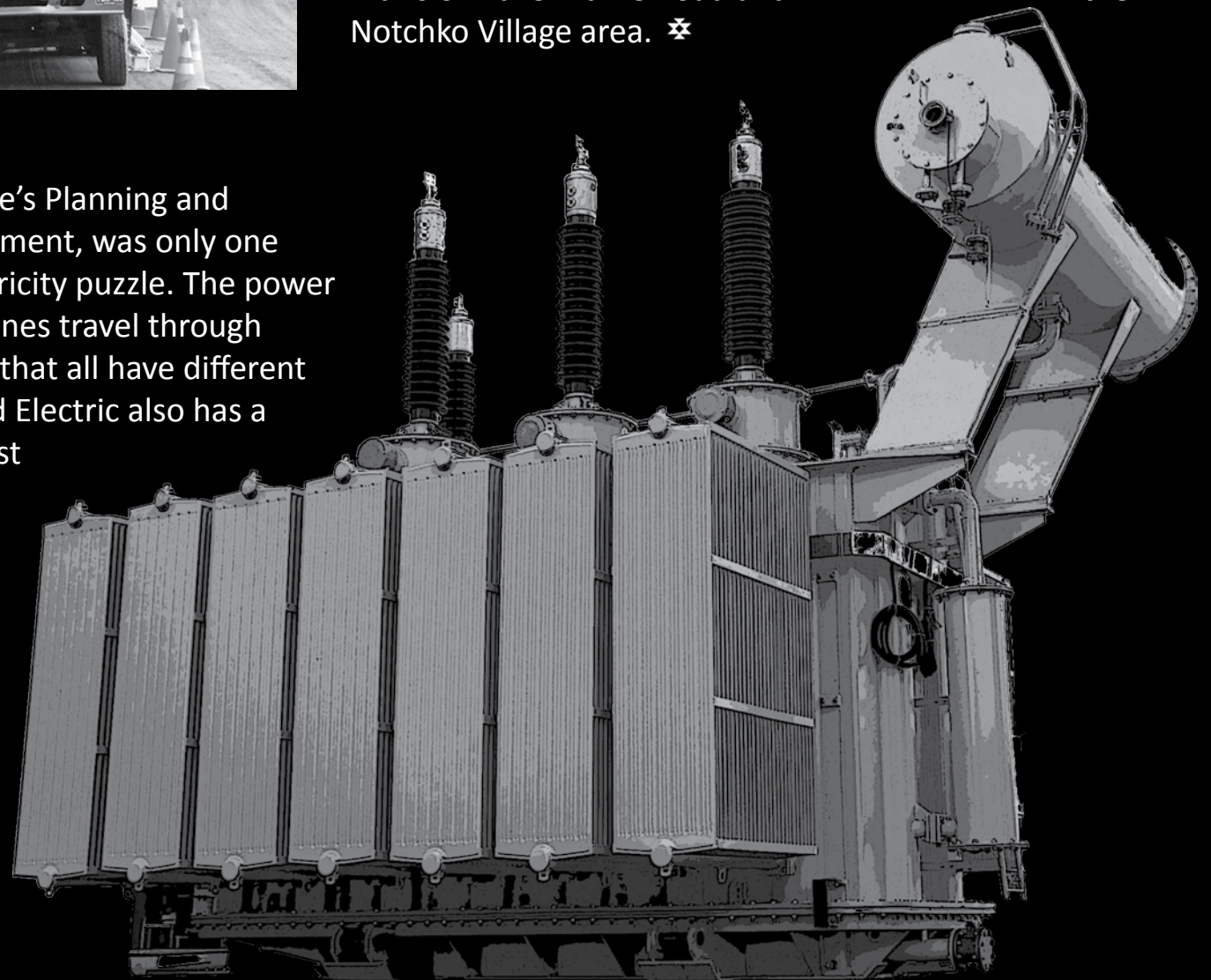
In several cases estates had been left unprobated for years, leaving no legal owner to sign the right of way documents. The Planning Department worked with the Legal Department to get the probates started so a power of attorney could be granted with the legal authority to sign right of way documents. One case involved a couple that had been divorced and not spoken to each other for more than thirty years. They lived in separate states. Mager also tracked them both down and acted as their go between to get them to agree on granting right of way.

To date, the Yurok Planning Department has constructed more than 20 miles of power lines from Weitchpec to McKinnon Hill, Upper Ke’pel Rd to Ke’pel Bluffs on Lake Prairie Road and in the Notchko Village area. ❖

#### Reservation.

The grant, secured by the Tribe’s Planning and Community Development Department, was only one step in putting together the electricity puzzle. The power poles and corresponding power lines travel through private, fee and tribal trust lands that all have different regulatory hoops. Pacific Gas and Electric also has a long list of requirements that must be met before the lines can be electrified.

The Planning Department had to track down and collect signatures from all of the different land owners, some of which the scattered across the globe. One, in particular, was incarcerated in a maximum security prison. On top of that he was constrained in solitary confinement.





# Education Department goes global

## Rainforest Leadership Group develops lessons for the classroom

The Yurok Tribe is now a member of an international team developing a new educational curriculum that will be used to teach how cultures are interconnected with the natural environment.

The Tribe's Education Department is working with the California Science Center and Colombia's Maloka, a science and technology center in Bogota, to create courses that will examine how Amazonian tribes and tribes of the Pacific Northwest interact with their aboriginal territory: the rainforest.

In December, the Rainforest Leadership Group, a contingent of Colombian nationals, indigenous teachers from

Columbia's Huitoto and Araro tribes, the Yurok Tribe, Los Angeles school teachers, and representatives from the California Science Center met at the Yurok Tribe's headquarters to lay the foundation for the project. Throughout

the week the newly formed assemblage made presentations, took tours and had meals together. Laura Kinney, a bilingual tribal employee, graciously translated for people who do not speak English and for those who don't understand Spanish.

The tribal people of the Amazon are inextricably linked to the tropical rainforest, just like Yurok people are to the temperate forest. The curricula for grades 5 and up will explore the unique connections from a cultural, ecological and historical vantage point.

"Yurok people have played an important role in the management of the forest since time immemorial. We are just as much a part of the forest as the redwoods and that is not reflected in today's school books, which is a huge disservice to students," said Yurok Education Director Jim McQuillen. "Reflecting the symbiotic tribal relationships in the

coursework will give students a much broader understanding of how each rainforest works and how to manage it for future generations."

The ancient Redwoods (keehl) are considered to be some of the First Beings on earth in the Yurok belief system.

"We can learn a lot from studying these ancient old ones and the connection that Yurok people have with the fragile ecosystem which sustains us all," McQuillen added.

The curriculum will also compare the impact of European colonialism, specifically the Spanish in the Amazon, on each of the communities and their respective ancestral lands.

"It only took 55 years for the white man to wipe out the

forest in this area," Yurok elder Walt Lara explained in his presentation about Yurok forest stewardship. "55 years."

In addition to being a river and forest-centered people, the Huitoto and Arara articulated that the struggles that they have survived were

very similar to those Lara described.

"I have heard the same words said by members of my tribe," said one of the Colombian teachers from Amazonia, and translated by Sigrid Ignacia Falla Morales, the director of collections for Maloka.

Many Huitoto, for example, in post colonial times were booted from their land by rubber tappers, who made massive profits just like those who clear-cut nearly all of the redwood in Yurok country.

The Amazonian tribal people and the Yurok Tribe are also implementing similar solutions to repairing the health of their respective communities which include: watershed restoration, land re-acquisition to meet subsistence and ceremonial needs of their people, along with language preservation projects.

"It is a very similar struggle to maintain culture and

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"IT IS A VERY SIMILAR STRUGGLE TO MAINTAIN CULTURE  
AND IDENTITY."

Sigrid Ignacia Falla Morales ~ *Director, Maloka*

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Indigenous teachers from Amazonian tribes listen to a translator through wireless head phones.

identity,” Falla Morales said.

In February, members of the Yurok Tribe’s Education Department are going to travel to Columbia to work with their South American counterparts to refine the curriculum.

“We are very excited to be a part of this paradigm-changing educational model,” McQuillen said. “It is truly taking education to the next level for the indigenous and the non-indigenous in the both Americas.”

The Rainforest curriculum will be rolled out and offered to California teachers at the state-wide American Indian Education Conference on March 15-19th. This year will be the first-time that Humboldt State University will be hosting the state-wide conference.

“We are challenging local K-12 teachers to attend this conference, since it is local this year,” McQuillen said.

The project, funded by the American Association of Museums and the U.S. Department of State’s Bureau of Education and Cultural Affairs, will be complete in June of 2012 and will be disseminated through teacher professional development workshops to over 300 teachers in the US and Colombia. ✘

## Q and A with Genevieve Markusson, the Yurok Tribe’s Youth Prevention Coordinator and Employee of the Month.



**How long have you been working for the Tribe?** I have been working here since August 2008.

**Why did you decide to work for the Tribe?** I have always wanted to return home to help build a stronger healthier community by sharing the knowledge and experience I have attained through college and my work as a Youth Coordinator throughout various Tribal communities.

**What does your job entail?** The tribal youth program combines culture with prevention education to educate youth on the harmful affects of drug and alcohol abuse. The Yurok youth program also provides mentoring/cultural programs for youth who are in juvenile facilities.

**What is the most satisfying part of your job?** Working with the youth in our tribal community and making a positive impact on their lives.

**How does your position serve the tribal membership?** I have had the pleasure of coordinating the Healthy Communities Youth Basketball tournament, Red Ribbon Week Dance Demonstrations, Fall Feast and Wellness Gathering, Prescription Drug Abuse/ Meth Prevention training, Young Men’s Summer Program, Young Women’s talking circles, Teen Community Service Program for Elders and various cultural activites. Also, each summer the Yurok Youth Program gives up to 25 Yurok youth an opportunity to provide community service for Elders.

**What do you do outside of work?** I have two wonderful boys who are my world. Everyday I learn something new about being a mom. I also love to coordinate basketball and softball tournaments and coach basketball.

**What are your plans for the future?** My plans for the future are to raise two healthy happy boys and continue to help guide our youth to build a stronger community for their familes and generations to come. ✘



# FUN WINTER ACTIVITIES



The Education Department's JOM Program, Head Start and the Northern California Indian Development Council sponsored winter break activities for Klamath youth. All of the Head Start students received an early holiday present followed by a delicious and nutritious holiday feast that the community was invited to attend. Young women beaded presents and made ornaments. A group of young men began the long and arduous job of carving a full-size canoe. All of the kids had a great time learning traditional techniques and creating contemporary art. ✧





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- 1. Julian DiLillo watches fellow Head Start students open presents.
- 2. Brook Sanderson makes a necklace.
- 3. Shania Escarcega sits on Santa's lap.
- 4. Lena-Belle Gensaw beads a necklace.
- 5. (Left) Robert Ray Jr. and Darvin Davis III chip big chunks off a huge slab of redwood.
- 6. Darvin Davis IV plays the drum and sings while the older boys work on the canoe.



# Young Yurok lands marine program funds

A young Yurok tribal member recently secured funding to develop a plan for the Tribe's first-ever Marine Resources Management Program.

Alicia McQuillen, 24, the Tribe's new Marine Resource Coordinator, wrote the \$50,000 Resources Legacy Fund grant, which will enable the Tribe to take a more proactive role in the management of coastal and oceanic waters within Yurok Ancestral Territory.

"Successfully securing this seed funding is a testament to the hard work of the Tribe's science-based departments whose work is recognized and respected by other environmental professionals," McQuillen said.

The Marine Resource Coordinator position is overseen by the Yurok Tribe's Office of the Tribal Attorney.

The Sacramento-based Resources Legacy Fund Foundation is a conservation group that funds long-term natural resource protection programs including wildlife habitat restoration, marine life protection and environmental policy initiatives. The Foundation has appreciated the benefits of Tribal Marine Resources Planning and the advantages to the State of California and Federal Government in having a complimentary Tribal component.

The function of a Yurok Marine Resources program will be to maintain and enhance marine life for future generations by employing traditional and contemporary scientific marine stewardship practices. Once developed, a fully functioning Marine Resource Program will enable the Tribe to have greater influence over marine management decisions in the approximately 85 miles of Yurok ancestral coastline.

A marine resource program will also provide the Tribe with a mechanism to further survey marine species, identify new research needs and assemble a team of elders and knowledgeable tribal members to identify traditional marine resource uses and stewardship strategies. From there the Tribe will develop a thorough marine resource management plan.

Historically, there were dozens of Yurok villages on the coast from the Little River to the south and Wilson Creek to the North. Yurok people continue to traditionally gather a wide variety of coastal resources such as clams, abalone and mussels in a sustainable manner. People also used tremendous redwood



There approximately 85 miles of Yurok coastline.

canoes to catch fish and harvest seals and sea lions. Prior to European contact, Yurok cultural regulations and harvest management practices ensured that all marine ecosystems remained intact and highly productive. Tribal members who were

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**"IF WE TAKE CARE OF THOSE RESOURCES,  
THEY WILL TAKE CARE OF US."**

*Alicia McQuillen ~ Marine Resource Coord.*

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educated by their elders about or learned the traditional ways of marine harvesting should contact Alicia McQuillen.

“Once our program is developed and implemented we’ll have the capability to systematically assess the state of our marine resources, guided by Yurok traditional ecological knowledge and priorities,” McQuillen said. “That assessment will drive a management strategy, both independently and in coordination with Federal and State agencies that will be geared to ensure that all future generations will have access to healthy foods and components of ceremonial regalia.”

Historically, there have been political decisions made at the federal and state level which have adversely affected the Tribe’s ability to continue cultural practices such as gathering seaweed and shells and harvesting fish and mussels without fear of arrest or citation. Habitat degradation, pollution and overharvesting by others have drastically diminished or completely wiped out certain marine species. Coho and Chum salmon, eulachon and night fish are just a few ocean species that are either too scarce to harvest or no longer exist in the Tribe’s ancestral territory.

Currently, in an effort to protect marine life, California’s Marine Life Protection Act Initiative (MLPAI) is setting up to close multiple sections of the coastline and in other segments limit the harvest of some marine species. The Tribe has worked tirelessly and successfully to educate the California Fish and Game Commission, the final decision makers, about its inherently sustainable coastal resource harvesting practices and its ability to manage marine-based resources.



Yurok Tribal Member and Marine Resource Coordinator Alicia McQuillen, who recently landed money that will enable the Tribe to plan a Marine Resource Program, gives a presentation for the California Fish and Game Commission.

At the beginning of the process, according to the parameters of the Act, a tribal member who harvested in a way that is consistent with Yurok tradition, which has ensured abundance for millennia, would be viewed in the same light as someone who poached from a protected area. Now, the Commission is working with the Tribe to find a way to ensure cultural practices don’t put tribal members at odds with the new law.

A Marine Resource Program would greatly benefit the Tribe in processes like the MPLAI. With a program the Tribe would be well positioned to coordinate Yurok Marine Resource needs and plans with State and Federal Marine Life initiatives. This will allow the Tribe to protect marine resources and vigorously defend and promote Yurok rights with the best traditional and western science.

In addition to making certain the Tribe continues to have access to cultural resources, it would also provide an

opportunity for the Tribe to share its vast knowledge of marine ecology and how to greatly reduce unsustainable harvesting and largely increase the possibility for struggling species to rebound.

The Tribe has the largest and most reputable team of fisheries, wildlife and environmental scientists in Northern California. Additionally, on the Marine Resource front, the Tribe’s biologists and policy makers have worked for the last five years with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration’s National Marine Resources programs. Federal waters that are part of Yurok Federal waters begin where state waters stop, three miles from the shore.

“We want to play an active role in the management and restoration of the resources throughout all of our Ancestral Territory. If we take care of those resources, they will take care of us,” McQuillen concluded. ✘



# YEDC brings healthy food to Pem-Mey

The Yurok Economic Development Corporation is working hard to increase access to healthy food on the Reservation.

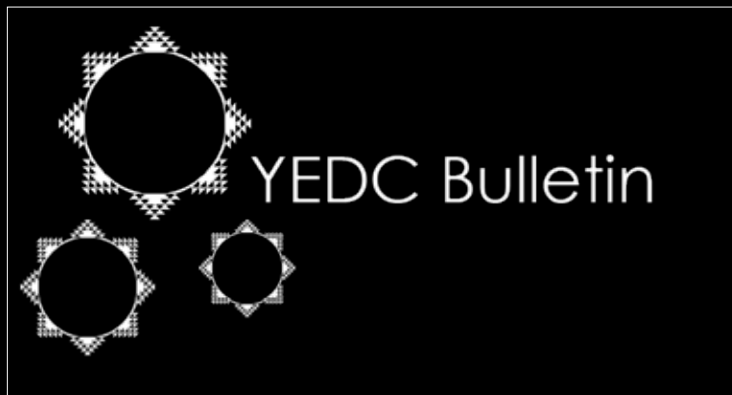
The YEDC recently added dozens of staple food items to the shelves at Pem-Mey, the Tribe's gas station and convenience store, located in Klamath. The focus of the additions has been to add more complete family meal ingredients. Instead of only carrying spaghetti sauce and noodles the Pem-Mey now offers ground beef or turkey, mushrooms, and garlic bread to go with it. Some of the other new foods include: ground sausage, flour, sugar, cereal, baby food, loaves of bread, soups, oatmeal, salsa and pancake mix. There is even pet food.

"Klamath is truly a food desert," said YEDC Director Tanya Sangrey. "We are doing everything we can to turn that around because having access to nutritious food is an essential part of living a healthy lifestyle."

A sizeable portion of the new eats come from quality regional producers, like Taylor's Sausage, regionally known as the best meat processor, which is something that is important to the YEDC. Local foods are always much fresher because they do not require lengthy shipping times.

Already, people are coming into Pem-Mey with their own grocery bags to purchase the new items.

"I am so glad I can now purchase all of the items I need to make a healthy breakfast," one recent shopper announced.



Currently, it requires a one hour, not including shopping time, trip to get to a grocery store. At today's gas prices it costs ten dollars just to make the drive. A person who went to the grocery store just four times a month would have to pay \$480 a year just to drive to get groceries. Also, there is a large number of people in Klamath who don't have a vehicle, which makes the challenge even tougher.

In addition to the lack of a proper place to buy healthy food, there are no farmer's markets like in other rural areas. There is a community garden that the Yurok Tribe subsidizes and operates during the growing season.

YEDC Director Sangrey is seeking input from the community in an effort to better reflect on the shelves what people need in their homes. To offer ideas contact Pem-Mey Food Services Manager Rose Tatman at (707) 482-3510 or email her at [rtatman@yuroktribe.nsn.us](mailto:rtatman@yuroktribe.nsn.us). ❄

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**"NUTRITIOUS FOOD IS AN ESSENTIAL PART OF LIVING A HEALTHY LIFESTYLE."**

Tanya Sangrey ~ YEDC Director

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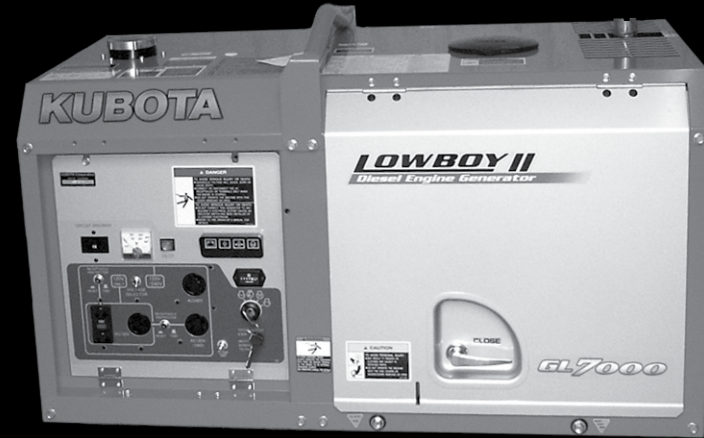


# Burglary stalls major tribal projects

The Yurok Department of Public Safety is looking for information that will advance its investigation into the theft of one of the Yurok Tribe's industrial-grade generators, an egregious act that has created major setbacks on the Tribe's internet and cell phone service projects.

The \$7,000 Kubota Lowboy II diesel generator was stolen from a locked, tribally-owned Connex container atop McKinnon Hill. The machine provided back up electricity for a solar-powered network that connects all of the tribal offices, Public Safety and a clinic to each other and to the internet. However, perhaps more importantly, the solar/generator combination was going to power the Tribe's nearly finished high-speed internet project.

The proposed cell tower installation at Weitchpec is also dependent on the wireless link the generator would have



made possible. The theft is a major limiting factor in bringing cell service to Weitchpec.

Both projects are now on hold until the Tribe can recover or replace the generator and better secure the site.

"Whenever anyone steals from the Tribe it has a very negative impact on the whole community," said Sid Nix, the Yurok Tribe's Weitchpec District Representative. "We take it very seriously."

Anyone with information leading to the arrest of those responsible or the recovery of the much needed generator should contact the Yurok Tribe's Department of Public Safety at (707) 482-8185. The sooner the generator is up and running the quicker upper Reservation residents will have high speed internet and cell service. ✘

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"WHENEVER ANYONE STEALS FROM THE TRIBE  
IT HAS A VERY NEGATIVE IMPACT ON THE WHOLE  
COMMUNITY."

Sid Nix ~ *Weitchpec Representative*

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## Important tribal member meeting

The Yurok Tribal Council is seeking **public input** regarding the Red Mountain Communication Tower.

All Tribal Member input will be recorded and provided to the Yurok Tribal Council.

For more information contact Buffy McQuillen at (707) 482-1350.

- January 14, 2012 @Worthington School in Eureka at 2pm.
- January 20, 2012 at Weitchpec Tribal Office at 4pm.
- January 27, 2012 at the Klamath Tribal Office at 4pm.





# Yurok Tribe

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Yurok Education Director (blue hat) Jim McQuillen MFCT, California Science Center Deputy Director of Education, Rob Rohovit, Ed.D, Science Center Senior Vice President Diane Perlov, Ph.D and Molaka Director, Sigrid Ignacia Falla Morales tour the Reservation.