

Characterizing Tribal Cultural Landscapes for Resource Preservation and Protection: Documenting culturally important areas - for tribes, by tribes

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Abstract

Understanding locations and types of significant archaeological and cultural resources is essential to their preservation and consideration during ocean and coastal planning processes. The goal of this project is to develop a proactive approach to working with Native American communities to identify such areas of tribal significance. Information from this effort will facilitate decision-making practices that consider the importance of these locales, giving tribal communities a stronger voice during regional planning. This project is a collaborative effort among the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Tribal Facilitators, and the Tribal Historic Preservation Offices of the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde in Oregon, Yurok Tribe in California, and Makah Tribe in Washington. This project uses a holistic cultural landscape approach that integrates science with historical, archaeological and traditional knowledge. The resulting tool describes methodologies and best practices for tribes to identify and communicate areas of significance; case studies from the three tribes will demonstrate how to use this tool. This effort will provide transferable, transparent and cost-effective methods for tribes to document places and resources, past and present, significant to their communities and outside agencies, thus enhancing their capability for consultation. The project will produce an approach adaptable by other tribal communities to help them record information on areas of tribal importance, and give them a stronger voice during regional planning processes. This project can help agencies and stakeholders engage with tribes prior to the proposal of activities that may impact tribal resources and areas.

Key words: Cultural Heritage, Cultural Landscapes, Indigenous Methodologies, Ocean Planning, Integrated Management

Overview

Understanding the types and locations of significant archaeological and cultural resources is essential to their preservation and consideration during the planning process for offshore renewable energy development, coastal and marine spatial planning, and marine protected area (MPA) establishment and management. To help address this information need, the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) is working with NOAA's Office of National Marine Sanctuaries (ONMS), the National Marine Protected Areas Center, the Tribal Historic Preservation Offices of the Yurok Tribe in California, Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde in Oregon, and Makah Tribe in Washington, as well as two Tribal Facilitators and the National Marine Sanctuary Foundation. The project – Characterizing Tribal Cultural Landscapes – is developing a proactive approach to working with Native American communities to identify areas of tribal significance that need to be considered in planning processes. Information from this effort will help facilitate decision-making that takes into consideration the importance of these locales, and give tribal communities a more powerful voice during regional energy planning and other marine planning processes.

This project concept grew independently from multiple directions. The MPA Center was seeking to operationalize the recommendations of the 2011 white paper approved by the Marine Protected Areas Federal Advisory Committee (MPA FAC), "Recommendations for Integrated Management Using a Cultural Landscape Approach in the National MPA System" (MPA FAC, 2011). Within ONMS, the Maritime Heritage Program was just beginning to implement its Maritime Cultural Landscapes Initiative, described in further detail by Dr. Brad Barr in his paper, "Developing a Maritime Cultural Landscape Approach to Managing US National Marine Sanctuaries". The Confederated Tribes of the Grand Ronde Community of Oregon (CTGR) submitted a proposal to BOEM to characterize its own cultural landscapes and develop a transferable methodology. The Makah Tribe had been partnering with the Olympic Coast National Marine Sanctuary for a number of years on an integrated approach to cultural and natural resource management. The Yurok Tribe also previously worked with NOAA on multiple efforts. All three tribes have a Tribal Historic Preservation Officer with an understanding of a cultural landscape approach. This project is funded by the U.S.

Department of the Interior, Bureau of Ocean Energy Management, through an Interagency Agreement with the U.S. Department of Commerce, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, National Ocean Service. It is contracted through the National Marine Sanctuary Foundation.

Cultural Landscape Approach

Using a holistic Cultural Landscape Approach (CLA) that integrates science with historical, archaeological, and traditional knowledge, this project will develop a tool describing best practices for tribal communities to identify and communicate areas of significance. Case studies from the three tribes will demonstrate how to use this tool. It will provide a transferable, transparent and cost-effective method for tribes with a connection to the coast to document past and present places and resources significant to their communities, thus enhancing their capacity for consultation in advance of any proposed undertakings.

The project's guiding principles are derived from Tuhiwai-Smith's "Decolonizing Methodologies" (2012). Many indigenous peoples and their supporters are engaged in the process of decolonizing methodologies, which involves widespread efforts to revitalize indigenous cultures as well as refocus the standard interpretation of history to be more inclusive and less ethnocentric. Some of these guiding principles include indigenous self-determination of a community's own research needs and priorities, and the ways in which research should proceed. Culturally sympathetic methods and culturally appropriate ethics thus take center stage. Training of indigenous researchers is also a priority, extending the boundaries for indigenous peoples of their fields and disciplines. Importantly, tribes develop and disseminate literature on research and methods, thus providing chances to educate the wider scientific, academic and policy communities. Additionally, this can foster increased collaboration among tribes, and help ensure accountabilities to and outcomes for tribes.

A Vision for Cultural Heritage

The MPA FAC white paper contains the following vision statement for cultural heritage:

“Achieving and maintaining healthy coastal and marine ecosystems requires a fundamental understanding of the relationships between people and the environment. Cultural heritage, which belongs to all people, emphasizes these

connections, whether that heritage takes the material form of, for example, maritime resources (such as shipwrecks), natural resources (such as marine species and habitats), or sacred places. Through the national MPA system, cultural relationships among people and historic, natural, and place-based heritage resources are preserved and perpetuated in ways that recognize and share multiple cultural voices and knowledge systems for the benefit of all” (2011).

A Cultural Landscape Approach (CLA) will help managers nationwide to identify and adopt policies and practices that manage cultural and natural resources at the ecosystem and landscape levels, in an integrated and adaptive manner. The protection of cultural heritage resources in marine areas is often separate from that of natural resources, a divide with administrative origins. The ecosystem-based management called for in the National Ocean Policy (Executive Order 13547), and advocated by countless scientists and natural resource management professionals “recognizes that the connections between living things and the physical environment are multifaceted and often inseparable” (MPA FAC, 2011). This ecosystem-based approach requires understanding both cultural and natural elements, and the human dimensions of the environment. In contrast to previous cultural resource management paradigms, which approached resources individually for study and preservation, “CLA uses cultural landscapes as an analytical framework to understand places and their associated resources” (MPA FAC, 2011). Analogous and complementary to ecosystem-based management, CLA examines the relationships among living and non-living resources, and their environment over time.

This integrated approach can advance deeper understanding of the human connections to, and influences on, critical marine ecosystems over time. Such comprehensive analysis and management can also identify the past and living cultural voices associated with an ecosystem, helping ensure the fullest possible public engagement in efforts including resource management, marine spatial planning, and ocean exploration. This holistic approach integrates the complexities and power of contemporary science with historical, archaeological, and cultural knowledge and the human values of love of

place. Adopting a Cultural Landscape Approach strengthens our will and enhances our capacities to steward wisely the world we inhabit.

Inter-tribal Workshops

Three inter-tribal workshops were conducted in the Fall of 2013, bringing together federal and tribal partners to identify best practices and general resources significant to tribal communities. The host tribe of each workshop engaged neighboring tribes with coastal ties, as well as regional staff of federal and state agencies, to identify best practices and general resources significant to tribal communities. An Analysis Guide describing these best practices and processes for identifying tribal cultural landscapes, including common terminology, is being drafted, to be augmented as necessary throughout the duration of the project. Each of the three participating tribes is designing and implementing their respective case studies identifying tribal cultural landscapes, and will create and manage their own databases and record systems. Throughout the project, partners will conduct outreach describing the process, including methodologies, analysis and non-sensitive data.

The workshops provided tribes with a connection to the Pacific Ocean an opportunity to contribute to the development of the methodology. We began with constructing a definition of the key concept: Tribal Cultural Landscape. During the first workshop, hosted by CTGR, participating tribes developed a draft definition for consideration by agency representatives. Both groups discussed applicability and opportunities for implementation within current legislation and mandates. During the second workshop, hosted by the Makah Tribe, and the third workshop, hosted by the Yurok Tribe, participants reviewed and refined the definition and discussed existing federal legislation where cultural landscape studies may be most applicable and beneficial to tribes and agencies. Workshop participants also began a glossary of terms for the Analysis Guide, and discussed the role of natural resources in cultural landscapes.

The working definition is:

“...any place in which a relationship, past or present, exists between a spatial area, resource, and an associated group of indigenous people whose cultural practices, beliefs, or identity connects them to that place. A Tribal Cultural Landscape is determined by and known to a culturally related group of indigenous people with relationship to that place” (Fig. 1).



Fig. 1



Fig.2

Fig. 1 TCL Project team conducts a panel discussion during the Inter-tribal Workshop hosted by Yurok Tribe in Klamath, CA. (V. Grussing)

Fig. 2 Memorial Post at the mouth of the Salmon River, to honor the Neschesne people and the village that stood there, Carved by Grand Ronde artist, Travis Stewart. (T. Stewart)

Beyond Traditional Cultural Properties

Tribal Cultural Landscapes (TCLs) as defined in this way are areas of cultural importance to communities that have multi-generational ties to geographic regions. This definition is broader and more open than that of Traditional Cultural Properties (TCPs), as defined in National Register Bulletin 38, in several ways (Parker and King, 1998). Most importantly, TCPs are locations with distinctly defined extents. The National Register definition does not allow for indigenous groups to show the interconnection of places that are integrally related but not within sight of each other. This broader definition of TCLs can encompass how TCPs and other cultural sites are related to a group's worldview and its geographic expanse. Second, TCLs enable the consideration of a community's worldview and identity. The primary focus of identity for a given society or cultural group is how its members understand their world and interact with it. Their stories, places of cultural practice, villages, places of creation, and religious locations define not just usage and worldview, but also an intimate relationship between space and identity. By expounding the worldview of an indigenous group, we can more

clearly understand a people's concept of identity and how it is transferred between generations. Third, for most indigenous cultures, the practice of culture is not something rooted in the past. It is a living, breathing, interactive part of modern identity. TCPs and many standard archaeological methods situate the practice of indigenous culture in the past. By looking at contemporary indigenous groups' cultural practices, we can more clearly understand past and future use of a given place, and the value it has to a community. Importantly, TCLs are determined by indigenous people with a relationship to that place. As summarized by McKinnon (et al., In press), community archaeology is based on indigenous people exercising agency in their cultural heritage, and "collaborating in the decision making about research topics, sites, data, curation, and the production of materials that are culturally appropriate and useful". The concept of Tribal Cultural Landscapes has broad applicability for tribes and agencies. Workshop participants noted its general applicability under NEPA, and parts of Section 101 and 106 of NHPA. This would allow TCL studies to be used in planning processes by agencies with land management responsibilities, and for regulatory and compliance requirements for most federal agencies and other designated parties. Implementation of the proposed process was identified by both tribal and agency representatives as being most meaningful and relevant during the pre-planning phase of project development commonly referred to as scoping. Workshop participants unanimously acknowledged the importance of information originating with tribes and being vetted through tribal process (Fig. 2).

Case studies and Analysis guide

In the case studies, cultural resource types to be identified may include traditional cultural properties, traditional subsistence and commerce activities, residential and occupational activities, spiritual and ceremonial sites and activities. Case study activities may include archival research, field investigations and site visits, community outreach, oral histories and transcriptions. Each participating tribe will determine its own research goals and priorities, in collaboration with BOEM and NOAA to ensure that they are contributing to overall project goals and outcomes. The project team will incorporate information and processes from the workshops and case studies into an Analysis Guide, which will include common terminology and provide a methodology for identifying tribal

cultural landscapes. The purpose is to devise a semi-replicable system that would be held internally by Tribes and specifically structured for recording information relevant to culturally-sensitive areas. In tandem with the data structure created and maintained by each tribe, there will be a working guide for the holder of the database as well as a counterpart document for use by federal agencies so they can ask questions appropriate to the data held and maintained by Tribes. This will allow for the collection and control of information by groups with the cultural understanding of the information, but also ensures that agencies have sufficient understanding of the information being held in order to ask appropriate questions as they relate to any proposed undertakings.

The development of the Analysis Guide will:

- Address the cultural understanding and context of cultural resources from an indigenous perspective;
- Address and suggest mechanisms for maneuvering through the sensitivity concerns of tribes;
- Develop a list of topics that should be consistently asked for by project proponents; and
- Develop a suggested template or guide for tribes to collect and hold information that can be queried internally with the ability to provide summary results to external parties.

The objective is to ensure that information is protected and retained by respective tribal communities, while ensuring that the information can be sufficiently synthesized and made available for review by federal agencies for any proposed undertakings. The case studies will record information related to tribal cultural landscapes, and the Analysis Guide will address pertinent querying and application of the data, emphasizing synthesis of the information without dishonoring the significance or sacredness of sites.

Benefits

The project will be completed by December 2014, and will result in an approach that can be adapted by other tribes and tribal communities to help record geospatial information and attributes on areas of tribal importance. As more tribal communities engage in the confidential identification of their own significant resources and areas of use, this approach can be beneficial to three overarching processes. It can give tribal

communities a more powerful voice during regional energy planning, coastal and marine spatial planning, and MPA establishment and management. This project is intended to help agencies such as BOEM and stakeholders engage with tribal and indigenous communities prior to the proposal of activities that may impact tribal resources and areas. In so doing, regional energy planning and siting decisions, and related impact assessments, can be made more soundly and efficiently, thus minimizing potential conflicts, controversies, legal challenges and delays.

This approach can also help fill a critical data gap in ocean planning and management, and be applied to coastal and marine spatial planning efforts through the National Ocean Council and Regional Planning Bodies. Although this project is not directly related to these specific efforts, the approach can be valuable in helping agencies such as NOAA and stakeholders communicate more effectively and appropriately with tribes, and involve them in the process. It can also facilitate communication among tribes, as well as clarify and promote tribal interests in specific planning areas.

The approach has the potential to be useful in the management of existing MPAs, as well as for tribal and indigenous communities interested in establishing their own MPAs. Many, if not all, existing MPAs are within the traditional territory of tribal and indigenous peoples. In some regions where tribes were dislocated from their territory early in the colonial era, tribal cultural resources may be seen to consist primarily of archaeological sites, historic landscapes, and archival resources. In these cases, where managers may have insufficient capacity to document and inventory these resources, the analysis guide and case studies created by this project could help researchers to conduct a more comprehensive landscape-level analysis while maximizing limited funds.

In regions where tribes have extant reservations, treaty or ceded territory, or usual and accustomed use areas (off-reservation areas of treaty-reserved fishing, hunting, and gathering rights), tribal cultural resources can also include natural resources and areas significant for current use by tribes. Increasingly, federal, state and local management agencies are incorporating tribal and indigenous interests, perspectives, and knowledge into agency management policies and practices. In order for these interests to be appropriately considered, indigenous peoples must be integrally involved in management processes. The approach created during this project can illuminate tribal

interests within MPAs and facilitate communication among management agencies, stakeholders, and tribes, ultimately giving tribal communities a stronger voice in both the protection of an MPA's cultural resources, as well as appropriate management of its natural resources. Furthermore, tribal communities who apply this approach to characterize their own significant resources and places may subsequently be able to leverage the products into the establishment of indigenous MPAs under indigenous authority and management.

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Biographies

Valerie Grussing is the Cultural Resources Coordinator for the National Marine Protected Areas Center. She works with federal, state, academic and NGO underwater archaeologists, coastal tribes, and other marine resource managers to foster partnerships and create information and tools to help protect and preserve the nation's

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Dave Ball is the Pacific Region Historic Preservation Officer and Diving Safety Officer for the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM). Before joining BOEM he worked for several archaeological firms in the Pacific Northwest. He received his BA in anthropology from Sonoma State University in 1992 and MA in anthropology from Florida State University in 1998. Dave has over 20 years' experience in archaeology and has directed field research on both terrestrial and underwater archaeological sites across the country, including inundated prehistoric sites, World War II shipwrecks, and deepwater shipwrecks in the Gulf of Mexico. He is currently serving on the Board of Directors for the Advisory Council on Underwater Archaeology.

Eirik Thorsgard is a tribal member of the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde Community of Oregon. He is the Tribe's appointed Historic Preservation Officer and coordinator of the Cultural Protection Program. He received his MA in Archaeology from Oregon State University and is completing his PhD in the same discipline. He regularly participates in cultural events and practices sponsored by his Tribe. He is actively engaged in research relevant to the identification and protection of TCPs in his ancestral lands and beyond. He has been appointed to numerous professional councils and committees focused on cultural heritage protection and identification.

Briece Edwards is Archaeologist for the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde Community of Oregon, based in the Tribal Historic Preservation Office. He coordinates cultural resource actions on Tribal Lands and develops and maintains the Tribe's Site Inventory. He serves as the Tribe's Cultural Resources compliance review contact, and coordinates interns and special projects within the THPO/Cultural Resources Protection Program. He developed the Program's GIS system to record, track, and monitor tribally important cultural resources. Briece received his BA in Anthropology from the University of Maryland, MA from North Carolina State University and MPhil from the University of Bradford.