TRIBAL VIEWS OF THE NORTHWEST FOREST PLAN

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Indian people are the original stewards of the lands in the Pacific Northwest and lived with the consequences of their decisions. The tribes have protected their forests with traditional values and management then legal precedents such as treaties with the federal government long before the present federal land managers have based their decisions by NEPA and ESA.

There are 76 federally recognized Tribes in the Northwest Plan area. All federal agencies are required to consult with these Tribes on every federal action — including the regulatory agencies such as the EPA, Fish and Wildlife Service and NOAA.

Over the past decade, many Tribal governments, spiritual leaders, and Indian people were interviewed to obtain their views on federal forest management changes under the NWFP and government-to-government relationships. Results of many of these interviews are contained in a pilot study report by George Smith in 2000 and the Tribal monitoring report you heard on the first day of the conference. The tribal monitoring process is unique because it attempts to measure the success of a political process instead of qualitative and quantitative measures for natural resources.

The tribes will convey their views about the NWFP and the decision process based on their experience over the years. The decisions that the line officers administer within the NWFP do not have to agree with the tribal perspective 100% of the time. The tribes do want to hear feedback about how their input was heard, what issues were agreed upon, what issues were disagreed upon, what points were persuasive, and how they can be more effective in the future as an advocate. Once the feedback loop is closed, then tribes can improve partnerships to help create a successful NWFP in the future.

SYNTHESIS REPORT- Social, Economic & Human Dimensions

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