A LONG HISTORY OF STEWARDSHIP

- Native peoples have been part of the ecosystems where they lived for thousands of years
- Interactions generally reciprocal and included stewardship of plants, animals and water
- This place based accumulated knowledge often referred to as "Traditional Ecological Knowledge" (TEK) or Indigenous Knowledge (IK)
- The melding of traditional practices and perspectives with western science has created a vibrant and innovative model of forestry

Southern Sierra Miwuk engage in a ceremony and traditional methods to ignite the prescribed fire. Brent Johnson, NPS
TRUST RESPONSIBILITY

- Varies by tribe, but primarily based on treaties signed (over 400)
- “Marshall Trilogy” a series of three Supreme Court cases (1823-1832) that defined Trust
- “Domestic Dependent” Nations- sovereign but with “federal primacy”
- Federal Government the Trustee
- Dawes General Allotment Act of 1887
FEDERAL FOREST MANAGEMENT OF TRIBAL LANDS

- "Bare right of occupancy" until Dead & Down Act of 1889
- Forestry Branch created 1910
- Sustained yield management directive codified into 1934 Indian Reorganization Act
- Sustained yield and economic development "drove the bus". Tribal vision or values often not front and center
- Funding and staffing shortages have been an issue for over a century
- In 1990, approximately 25% of foresters non-native

Clear cut block on an allotment on the Quinault Indian Reservation. 1960s. Harold Weaver, Forest History Society
A MOVE TO TRIBAL SELF DETERMINATION

- 1975: Indian Self Determination and Education Assistance Act (PL-638) authorized tribes to “sub-contract” programs.
- In 1994, PL-638 further amended to allow more tribal self governance through compacts.
- 2016: The Indian Trust Asset Reform Act (ITARA) authorizes tribes to create their own forestry regulations.
- In last two decades, programs such as the Tribal Forest Protection Act (TFPA), the Good Neighbor Authority (GNA), and Reserved Treaty Rights Lands (RTRL) have given tribes the opportunity to manage on federal lands.

Flathead Indian Reservation Forest Management Plan, 2000
Figure ES.1. Forestry Self-governance program by number of trust acres. (Source: 2019 F&A report.)

19.3 Million Forest Acres

- All OIA Start: 3.0%
- PL. 93-638: 0.1%
- Part PL. 93-636: 7.1%
- All Compact: 13.4%
- Partial Compact: 57.0%
- Other: 19.4%

Reservations with Significant Timberland Resources

Major Timberland Resources

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Legend:
- OIA Start
- PL. 93-638
- Part PL. 93-636
- All Compact
- Partial Compact
- Other

Scale: 1:10,000,000
NIFRMA created the Indian Forest Management Assessment Team (IFMAT) process

IFMAT released 4 times over last 30 years

Has documented increased satisfaction among tribal members as tribal compacting and contracting have increased

Tribes showing creative, innovative forest management that is becoming a national model

However, consistent underfunding and staffing shortages are major challenges