

COASTAL PEOPLES ADDRESS CLIMATE CHANGE

FIRST STEWARDS

JULY 17—20, 2012

NATIONAL MUSEUM OF THE AMERICAN INDIAN. WASHINGTON, D.C.



A GROUNDBREAKING EVENT

Join more than 300 coastal indigenous elders, leaders, cultural practitioners, scientists and witnesses, as well as non-tribal participants, for the first national U.S. symposium addressing the impacts of climate change on coastal indigenous peoples.

This inaugural event will be hosted by the coastal treaty tribes of Washington state—the Hoh, Makah, and Quileute Tribes and the Quinault Indian Nation—in collaboration with the Smithsonian Institution's National Museum of the American Indian, NOAA's Office of National Marine Sanctuaries, and other partners. These coastal tribes are resource trustees with treaty-derived management authority for their natural resources.



A MATTER OF CULTURAL SURVIVAL

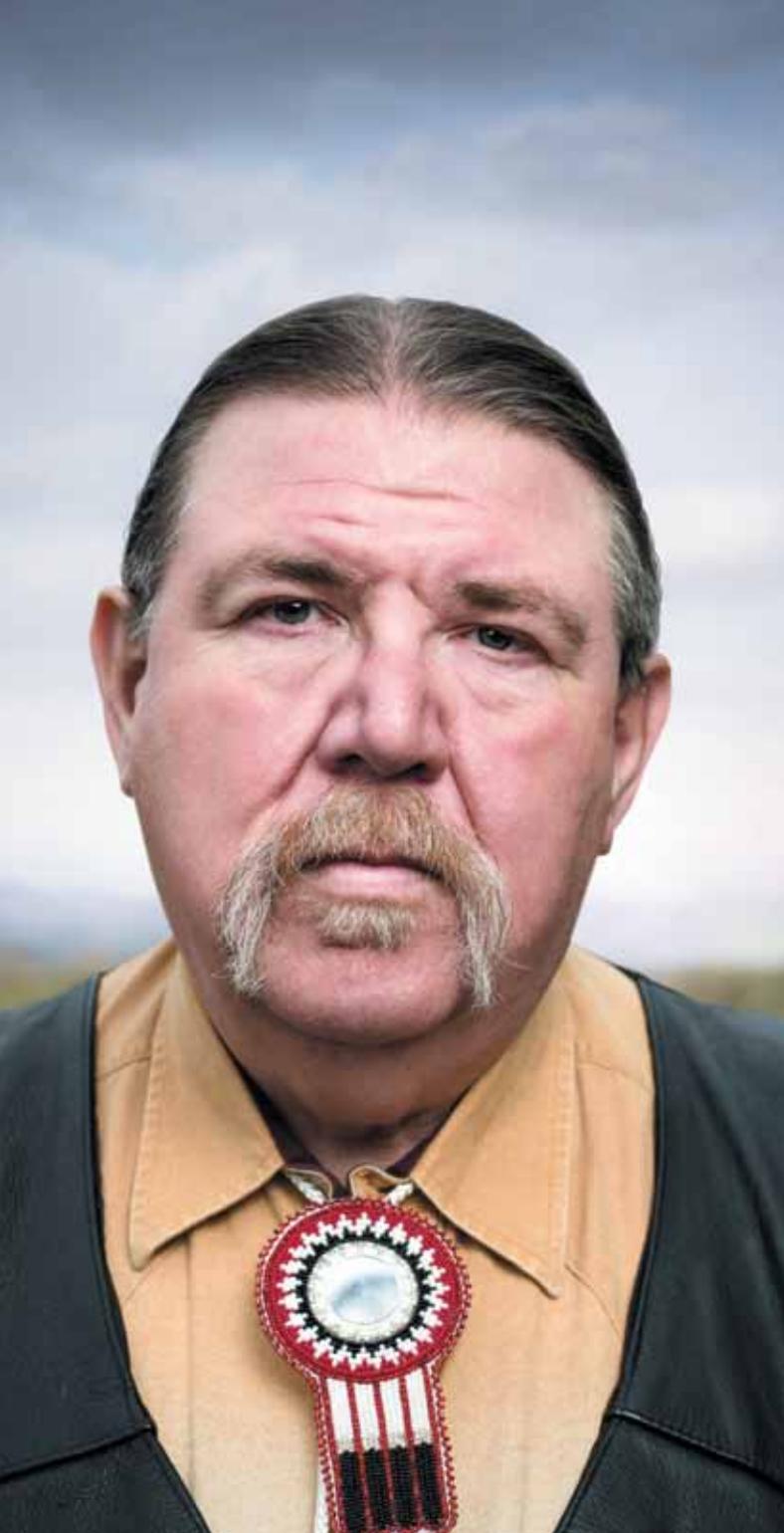
Climate change, the variation in the Earth's climate over time, is a pressing issue for coastal indigenous cultures, other coastal communities, and coastal and ocean resource managers. Among its most dramatic and economically significant effects are heat waves, drought, floods, and changing ocean conditions that affect the sea life on which coastal cultures depend.



An aerial photograph of a coastal area. The image shows a large body of blue water on the left and a narrow, irregularly shaped strip of land on the right. The land strip is covered with a mix of green vegetation and light-colored sandy or rocky terrain. The water's surface has a textured, rippled appearance. The overall scene is captured from a high angle, looking down at the coastline.

BECAUSE OF THEIR UNIQUE HISTORY OF ADAPTATION
AND TRADITIONAL KNOWLEDGE, COASTAL INDIGENOUS
CULTURES ARE SENTINELS AND LEADERS IN SOCIETAL
ADAPTATION AND MITIGATION IN RESPONSE TO
CLIMATE CHANGE IMPACTS.

ALL OF US CAN LEARN FROM THEIR EXPERIENCES.



LEARNING FROM TRADITIONAL ECOLOGICAL KNOWLEDGE

Regional panels representing Pacific Islands, Alaska, the West Coast, East Coast, Great Lakes and Gulf of Mexico will examine how Native people and their cultures have adapted to climate change for thousands of years, and what their future, and that of the nation, may hold as the impacts of climate change continue.

The symposium dialogue will identify ways indigenous cultures may be able to increase their resilience and adaptability to predicted climate change impacts—and how these lessons apply to us all. Participants will identify ways to incorporate indigenous ecological knowledge in U.S. climate change science, education and governance.

An aerial photograph of a coastline. A dark, narrow strip, possibly a reef or a line of vegetation, runs diagonally from the top left towards the bottom right. To the left of this strip is a wide, sandy beach. To the right is the ocean, with a shallow, turquoise-colored lagoon or reef flat area between the dark strip and the outer edge of the beach. The text is overlaid in the center of the image, spanning across the dark strip and the turquoise water.

ON THE LAST DAY OF THE CONFERENCE, SYMPOSIUM
WITNESSES WILL SHARE THEIR INSIGHTS ON HOW
COASTAL INDIGENOUS CULTURES AND ALL PEOPLE
MUST ADAPT TO OUR CHANGING CLIMATE.



For more information about the First Stewards symposium,
including event registration and sponsorship opportunities,
please visit firststewards.org

SYMPOSIUM HOSTS:



SYMPOSIUM PARTNERS:



Portraits by John Keatley

Cover page: Billy Frank Jr. chairman of the Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission

Page 4: Micah McCarty, Makah tribal chairman

Page 7: Ed Johnstone, Fisheries Policy, Quinalt Indian Nation

Aerial photography by Benjamin Drummond / LightHawk
