



THE CULTURAL CONSERVANCY

Preserving Traditional Cultures and Their Ancestral Lands

Winter 1995

1994-1995 Activities

Boozhoo, Anishinaabe!

("Hello People" in Ojibwe)

New Office Space

In September 1994, The Cultural Conservancy (TCC) finally moved into a "non-home" office in a non-profit building in Davis, California. We now have a central meeting place and a publicly used reference library. Board members have donated some office equipment, but other things are needed (please see pg. 2 for our wish list). Davis is a small college-town one and a half hours northeast of San Francisco and is where Executive Director, Melissa Nelson, has started a graduate program in cultural ecology.

New Advisory Council

- Mililani Trask (*Hawaiian*) — Kia aina (governor) of Ka Lahui Hawai'i; former Board Member
Robert Woableza LaBatte (*Lakota*) — educator, filmmaker, activist
Dennis Martinez (*O'Odham/Crow/Chicano*) — Society for Ecological Restoration, Takelma InterTribal Project
Ayapish Slow (*Chunach/Diné*) — cultural resources, Native American monitoring
Emily Schwalen (*Cherokee*) — UC Davis Ecology Program, Natural Resources Conservation Service
Chuck Striplen (*Mutsun Ohlone*) — The BASKET Project, California State University—Monterey Bay
Lucinda Mooney (*Choctaw/Seminole*) — Hartnell College
Philippe Jordi — senior planner with the Wampanoag Tribe

New Staff

In December 1994, The Cultural Conservancy hired Ismana Carney as a Program Director with a particular emphasis in project fundraising and management and public relations. Ms. Carney is of east Indian descent and has spent over 5 years working with and for Native leaders such as Dennis Banks, Ann Marie Sayers, and Bernice Torrez.

"It was a prayer answered when I met Melissa, and more than that, a confirmation that the work which I have been doing for the past five years or so is right work for me. The Cultural Conservancy, its goals, and vision fits so well with my own vis à vis working with indigenous cultures, that I was more than gratified when I was offered to become a part of TCC's staff. Most importantly, it provides the opportunity for me to continue to work for the preservation and protection of the world's indigenous cultures.

I have spent the last few years working in various capacities with many of the local Monterey Peninsula Native American councils and tribes. I have also worked with Native American leaders from other areas and from out of state. Most of my activities have revolved around Program Development with the express purpose of educating and sensitizing the general public to the critical issues facing indigenous peoples and also to present the complexity and profound beauty of the cultures." — Ismana Carney

In October 1995, we hired Emily Pagliaro as a part time administrative and research assistant. Emily is completing her Bachelor's degree at UC Davis, where her major is International Relations and minor is Native American Studies. Emily grew up in Hawai'i and has experience in historic preservation and native plant care. Emily will assist director Melissa Nelson in managing the office and conduct Native lands research for General Counsel Patricia Cummings.



"Indian people must take a leading role in environmental education as Western society begins to realize that it needs to forge an ecologically based cosmology, complete with new myths and new applications of science and technology."

—Greg Cajete, *Look To The Mountain*

Speaking for the Board of Directors, I want to thank each of you who have generously donated to our organization and support our efforts to preserve native lands and cultures. We have accomplished some wonderful things in 1994 and 1995, and with your on-going support, we can continue to accomplish interesting and important projects in the future.

— Melissa Nelson, Executive Director



THE CULTURAL CONSERVANCY

THE CULTURAL CONSERVANCY is a land conservation organization dedicated to the preservation of traditional cultures. The Conservancy conducts research and educational programs on traditional ways of life, the protection of indigenous lands and "intellectual property" rights, advocates religious freedom and human rights for land-based spiritual practices and beliefs, and provides technical and legal information and assistance to native groups. Where appropriate, THE CULTURAL CONSERVANCY assists local native groups to form their own land trusts, acquire land, property rights, and cultural conservation easements in order to protect the natural habitat of their traditional cultures.

We work with existing public and private organizations, tribes, and native preservation groups to ensure that the lands and property rights we help to protect or acquire are maintained, restored and protected as traditional cultural reserves. The Conservancy works with native groups in the United States, Canada, Hawai'i, and South America. Our goal is to return "native lands to native hands."

Our Board of Directors, advisors and staff are a diverse group of native leaders, traditional practitioners, and experts in historic preservation, law, natural and cultural resource conservation and restoration, land rights, intellectual property rights, religious freedom and philanthropy. We welcome your interest and invite you to join THE CULTURAL CONSERVANCY. Please see page 4 for membership form.

The Cultural Conservancy Board of Directors:

Alejandro Argumedo (Keebuan)
Mabealani Cypher (Hawai'i)
Kimla McDonald
Patricia J. Cummings, General Counsel

Executive Director: Melissa Nelson (Ojibwe)
Program Director: Immana Carney
Administrative Assistant: Emily Pagliaro

Volunteers: Emily Schwalen, Colin Farish

P.O. Box 72086, Davis, CA 95617
(916) 759-2285, Fax: (916) 759-2268
E-mail: mknelson@icc.apc.org; World Wide Web site
(under construction): <http://www.icc.apc.org/costano/CulturalConservancy.html>

The Cultural Conservancy is funded by donations from our members and foundation grants. We'd especially like to acknowledge the contributions from our supporting members: Allen Kanner, Kraemer Winslow, Jennifer Easton, Gary Nabhan, Alan & Tori Drengson.

Foundations: Fund of the Four Directions, The San Francisco Foundation, The Rockwood Foundation, Vanguard Public Foundation, C.S. Fund, International Transpersonal Association.

Wish List: relatively new Macintosh computer, laser printer, copy machine.

SACRED LAND PROTECTION EFFORTS



Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta, Colombia

In collaboration with the C.S. Fund and the Tairona Heritage Trust, we successfully completed our project to protect some of the ancestral lands of the Kogi people of Colombia. Through our mutual efforts, we assisted the Kogi in purchasing back approximately thirty-eight hectares of their traditional land on an ancient training site called *Hukemezia*. Four other small areas of land are in the process of being transferred to the Kogi. This land has been unavailable to them for four hundred years and it now serves as a buffer zone between the Kogi and the outside world.

"You are uprooting the Earth
and we are divining to discover how to teach
you to stop. . .
We work to take care of the world. . .
We are all here to give a warning. . ."

Kogi Mama in PBS documentary, *From the Heart of the World: Elder Brothers Warning*, by Alan Ercira. To order a copy of this video or receive more information about the Kogi, contact: *Tairona Heritage Trust*, Chisholme House, Robertson nr Hawick, Rox., Scotland TD9 7PH; e-mail: gfalvey@gn.apc.org.

Hawai'i

Ka Lahui Hawai'i, a native initiative for self-government that argues for federal recognition of native Hawaiian sovereignty, has, with the assistance of FCC, initiated its land recovery project by creating a national land trust. Ka Lahui is currently negotiating with a private donor to have lands returned to them. For more information, contact: *Ka Lahui Hawai'i*, P.O. Box 4964, Hilo, HI 96720.

The Return of Kaho'olawe

In November 1993 Congress voted to permanently stop all military training and bombing of Kaho'olawe island and return title of the island to the State of Hawai'i. Congress also authorized funding for the

cleanup and restoration of the island's cultural and natural resources over the next ten years. The island will serve as a cultural reserve and will be held in trust for the sovereign native Hawaiian entity when it is reestablished and recognized by the state and federal governments. Contact: *Kaho'olawe Island Reserve Commission*, 33 South King St., Room 403, Honolulu, HI 96813.

Mt. Shasta, California

In 1992, Cultural Conservancy Board member, Patricia Cummings, on behalf of the Wintu and along with the Sierra Club, successfully sued the U.S. Forest Service, forcing them to reconsider plans for a ski resort at Panther Meadows, a Wintu sacred site on Mt. Shasta. Mt. Shasta was then determined eligible for listing on the National Register as a traditional cultural property. In 1994, a California Congressman and numerous private property owners were outraged at the historic register designation of Mt. Shasta and convinced the Department of the Interior to downgrade Mt. Shasta's historic designation. Patricia Cummings continues to provide legal services to the Winnemum Wintu and is currently working towards preservation of their sacred sites on public lands, as well as obtaining permanent protection, through private agreement, of sacred sites on private lands. The Cultural Conservancy supports Patricia Cummings with our sacred sites public education programs.

Mt. Graham, Arizona

Mt. Graham is sacred land to the San Carlos Apache. It is the home of mountain spirits, protector from illness and enemies, source of power to medicine people and site of ceremonies and burials. The University of Arizona and its partners the Max Planck Institute and the Vatican (the Mt. Graham International Observatory - MGIO) have already desecrated part of the mountain by building two telescopes on Mt. Graham without consulting with the San Carlos

Apache or complying with U.S. cultural, environmental, and religious protection laws. The construction of the third and largest telescope has been halted in federal court until the U of A completes the environmental and cultural impact reports. But recently the AZ Congressman Jim Kolbe announced he will soon introduce an amendment in Congress to again exempt the developers of the MGIO from complying with the critical environmental and cultural protection laws to allow the U of A to build the third telescope. Please oppose this violation of Native American religious freedom and environmental protection by writing or calling your local congressmen.

The Cultural Conservancy conducts educational events about Mt. Graham by giving showings of ASC videos and hosting ASC leaders at evening lecture events. Contact: Apache Survival Coalition, P.O. Box 1237, San Carlos, AZ 85550; Tel/Fax: (602) 475-2543.

San Francisco Bay Area, California Native Lands and Cultures Restoration Project.

In January 1995, we were generously funded by the San Francisco Foundation to implement a planning process to develop a culturally-based vision of restoration work in the San Francisco Bay Area. The goals of this project are to support a process of coalition building among Native American groups and other organizations involved in cultural and ecological restoration and to restore native peoples' land-based traditions and native plants and animals in the San Francisco Bay Area. The project has consisted of four meetings aimed at public education about cultural traditions and Native land restoration opportunities involving local Native people in cooperation with restoration efforts underway at the Presidio. We are bringing together a Bay Area network of native elders, teachers, restorationists and community members to coordinate restoration projects in the Four Sacred Directions of the Bay Area. Two sites have already been selected: the San Francisco Presidio to the West, where we are working with Joe Myers of the National Indian Justice Center (NIJC) to coordinate restoration at the sites of the future Indigenous Studies Center, California Indian Museum, and Native village. The Southern site will be at Indian Canyon, a living Indian Heritage Area outside of Hollister, CA. There we are coordinating efforts with Ann Marie Sayers, chairperson for the Mutsun band of Ohlone/Costanoan Indians, to restore the creek, assist in creating fire breaks and install composting toilets. We are currently consulting with the Coast Federated Miwok people to see how we can be of assistance to their cultural restoration efforts in Marin county. Our final round-table meeting was held in November and a complete project summary is available. We invite you to become a part of this network of restorationists working to preserve native lands and cultures. Please contact us with your ideas and experiences. You can reach NIJC at #7 4th St., Suite 46, Petaluma, CA 94952; (707) 762-8113 and Indian Canyon at Box 28, Hollister, CA 95024; (408) 637-4238; World Web Page: <http://www.usc.edu/costano>.

Other 1994-1995 Highlights

■ March 1994, TCC organized a panel on "The Commodification of the Sacred" featuring Beth Burrows, Alejandro Argumedo, and Patricia Cummings, for the annual Environmental L.A.W. Conference in Eugene, Oregon.

■ May 1994, Patricia Cummings and Mililani Trask gave keynote addresses on Native Rights at the Earth Wisdom Conference in Killarney, Ireland.

■ June 1994, Melissa Nelson attended the Indigenous Environmental Network "Protecting Mother Earth Conference" at the Mole Lake Sokaogan Chippewa Community in Wisconsin, and gave a presentation on setting up native land trusts.

■ August 1994, Melissa Nelson attended a U.N. Environmental Program Biodiversity Convention planning meeting in Geneva, Switzerland to discuss issues involved with setting up a biodiversity information clearing-house.

■ September 1994, *The Cultural Conservancy* co-sponsored a Citizen's Dialogue on "Biodiversity, Biotechnology, and Intellectual Property Rights" in San Francisco, California. This was a very significant educational meeting and information packets are available. This meeting was organized and funded by the Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy and C.S. Fund.

■ Also in September 1994, Board members Patricia Cummings and Mililani Trask gave testimonies on native land rights and sacred site issues at the "U.N. Hearing on Racism and Human Rights in the U.S.," Oakland, California.

■ October 1994, *The Cultural Conservancy* sponsored four members of Ka Lahui Hawai'i to attend the Land Trust Alliance (LTA) Rally in Chattanooga, Tennessee for training in land trust conservation techniques. We also presented a panel discussion on "Saving Native Lands & Cultures," which was very well attended. For LTA '95 we organized a field trip to Indian Canyon and presented on "Cultural Conservation Easements."

As a result of our panels and conversation generated at these conferences, The Cultural Conservancy formally requested land trusts and other conservation groups to share with us any activities they are doing with local native groups. We are especially interested in any draft documents or language that pertains to "cultural conservation easements," or "memorandums of understanding" (MOUs). According to the Land Trust Alliance, conservation easements are "legal agreements a property owner makes to restrict the activities that may take place on his/her land." Usually this involves protecting a grove of trees, a wetland, or other special natural feature. We are extending the purpose of a conservation easement to include protecting places of cultural significance such as native sacred sites and gathering areas. "Cultural conservation easements" are a tool by which native people can permanently protect and gain access to their ancestral lands. We have already received some information from various land trusts (a special thanks to the Little Traverse Conservancy and the Vermont Housing Trust) and we welcome other contributions or comments.

Cultural Education Projects

■ In February 1995, in co-sponsorship with the Monterey Peninsula College, The Cultural Conservancy presented "An Evening With Dennis Banks," noted Native American leader, social activist and educator. Close to 300 people attended. The Conservancy received major press coverage for this event in the *Monterey Peninsula Herald*, *Coast Weekly* and the *Salinas Californian*.

■ In April 1995, in co-sponsored with UC Santa Cruz, we presented "Apache Days: Sacred Land-Sacred Trust." This event featured talks by Inez Talamantez, Mescalero Apache and professor of Religious Studies at UC Santa Barbara and Mike Davis, vice-chairperson for the Apache Survival Coalition and leader and protector of Mount Graham. We were also honored with the Mescalero Apache Mountain Spirit Dancers, who danced outside around a fire overlooking the Monterey Bay.

■ Also in April 1995, TCC presented a Citizen's Dialogue on "Indigenous Conservation, Protection, and Restoration - Exploring a Culturally-based Vision of Restoration" on Earth Day at the Presidio in San Francisco. Speakers included Joe Myers, National Indian Justice Center, Dennis Martinez, Society for Ecological Restoration, Ann Marie Sayers, Chairperson for Indian Canyon Band of Ohlone Indians, and Jimmy Langman, Earth Island Institute.

■ In June 1995, program director Ismana Carney presented an audio-visual lecture: "Paths to the Sacred - The Apache Girl's Puberty Ceremony." This event was co-sponsored with the American Indian Museum of Monterey, California under the auspices of the California State Historic Parks and attended by 80 people.

■ In July 1995, The Cultural Conservancy held a two-day training session at Indian Canyon, the ancestral lands of the Mutsun-speaking band of Ohlone Indians. The theme of the training was "Ecological & Cultural Restoration," with a particular emphasis on healthy coalition building. This event was part of our Native Lands and Cultures Restoration Project.

■ In September 1995, Melissa Nelson attended the International Society for Ecological Restoration conference and presented a paper with Emily Schwalen on "San Francisco Bay Area Coalition Building with Native Americans: Guidelines for Restoration of Community." Melissa and Emily actively participated in the "Indigenous Peoples: Traditional Knowledge" panel discussions and attended the first planning meeting for the Indigenous Peoples Restoration Network (IPRN). For more information contact TCC or IPRN director, Dennis Martinez, 740 Greenleaf Dr., Eagle Point, OR 97524; (503) 830-1658.



Special Projects:

■ *Saving Native Lands Handbook*

Patricia Cummings is writing a handbook which will outline many of the tools and practical methods used to protect the ancestral lands of traditional native communities. We have received a \$5,000 donation from Jennifer Easton for the writing of the technical part of this handbook and are requesting additional funds and/or matching grants. The additional funds would enable the handbook to include chapters by other indigenous land activists such as Winona LaDuke, Tom Goldtooth, Jeanette Armstrong, Gary Nabhan, and Dennis Martinez.

■ *Documenting Traditional Knowledge: with Bernice Torrez, Pomo-Kashaya Healer and Spiritual Leader.* By Ismana Carney

One of the stated purposes of the TCC Native Knowledge Working Group is as follows:

"When requested by a native group or individual, assist in documenting traditional knowledge systems..."

In keeping with this tenet I am currently involved in documenting the religious/spiritual practices of the Kashaya tribe as described and elaborated by Bernice Torrez. Ceremonial dances and songs, their visionary or dreamed origins and functions within the tribe are described. Various healing techniques, practices and materials used will be discussed including the particular and specific healing uses of songs and dances.

Bernice is the daughter of the extensively documented Essie Parrish, Kashaya healer and Prophetess. Her mother trained her in the singing and healing arts as did other highly renowned healers and spiritual leaders such as Annie Jarvis and Mabel McKay. Bernice is one of a few left in her tribe who retains her language, an enormous catalogue of traditional songs held in her memory (she admits to over 400), as well as extensive knowledge in the spiritual ways of her people. Additionally, her own personal recollections of her mother and other important historical tribal figures are exceedingly valuable. Her life and her knowledge are very important and highly relevant to the current efforts

on the part of many of us to preserve as much of California Indian history and culture as possible. She is in contact with the Smithsonian Institute who wish to record her. She has been published in *News From Native California* and has worked closely over the years with Robert Oswalt of the California Language Institute at Berkeley to document the Kashaya language.

The "Bernice Project" needs funding at this point to achieve timely completion. We need to record her while her voice is still strong, and to complete a video documentary while she is in good health. If you are interested in supporting this important archival work, please contact: *TCC Program Director, Ismana Carney, 208 Hacienda Drive, Scotts Valley, CA 95066; (408) 461-9627 Fax: (408) 461-0226.*

■ *The Native Lands & Cultures Restoration Program:*

Based on our final planned meeting, it became clear that we want to continue to support the restoration efforts already occurring at Indian Canyon and assist NIJC in the development of a Californian Indian presence at the San Francisco Presidio. The cultural revitalization work of the Coast Federated Miwok is very exciting and we support their restoration work at Olompoli State Park near Novato. The Bay Area Native American Ministry is working with the east bay urban Indian community on a number of cultural restoration projects. TCC plans to work with them on their innovative educational and ceremonial activities.

Cultural Education Projects:

■ Program Director, Ismana Carney, recently met with Elizabeth Sackler of the American Indian Ritual Object Repatriation Foundation to begin initial planning stages for a March 1997 national Repatriation conference to be held in Monterey, California. We are using the term "repatriation" to include the return of native lands, sacred objects, and, in response to the outrageous life patenting activities of some biotechnology companies, the return of human cell lines and body parts. Jeanette Armstrong from British Columbia, Canada will be a key advisor in organizing this gathering.

Please Join!

Yes, I would like to support THE CULTURAL CONSERVANCY. Enclosed is my tax-deductible donation:

- \$25 regular membership
- \$50
- \$100
- Other: Amount \$ _____
- \$1 Native or low-income membership

Information Packets: (price includes shipping)

- \$10 - EcoCultural Restoration Reader
- \$5 - Native Knowledge Working Group
- \$5 - Native Land Trusts
- \$5 - Sacred Sites
- \$ _____ Total

Please make check out to: "Cultural Conservancy" and mail to P.O. Box 72086, Davis, CA 95617.

I would like to acknowledge and thank Tony Vargas Running Shield for offering his beautiful artwork to use in our newsletter. Tony is Lakota and lives in South Dakota. For further information about Tony and his artwork, please contact The Cultural Conservancy.

Printing: Positive Press Design: Daniel Ziegler



THE CULTURAL CONSERVANCY

P.O. Box 72086

Davis, CA 95617

