



# Smith River Rancheria

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November 25, 2009

California Marine Life Protection Act Initiative  
North Coast Regional Stakeholder Group Nomination

Nominee Name and Contact Information:

Suntayea Steinruck, NAGPRA/THPO Officer  
Smith River Rancheria of Tolowa/Dee-ni' Indians  
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1. I am a lifetime resident of the North Coast of California. My connections to this area and the marine resources within our ancestral lands are traced back generations upon generations and have been proven through archaeology to be at least 5-10 thousand years. It is with this first-hand knowledge and perspective that I bring the Native aspect to the MLPA NCRSG.
2. As a member of our tribal community and a member of our more diverse community, I have a balanced perspective and consider all points of view and how this law will impact our entire economy and life-ways.
3. I am willing to express fundamental interests of all stakeholder groups and willing to consider the concepts of all user groups in our Region with a direct approach and open mind.
4. As Native people, we are taught to be well rounded in our ways and it has been my practice to consider all options and the consequences of such choices. We have to consider the "bigger picture" as all things are connected in some way. We can not focus only on one perspective and think to achieve balance. As a Native person, it is my inherent responsibility to not only care for our fellow human beings but always think of everything as having a spirit and we must treat everything accordingly. One thing does not outweigh another when looking at a bigger picture.
5. I am able to access and use effective communication in this process through the internet as well as willing to meet with those close to my area in person to discuss topics. I believe communication is imperative in this process and will ultimately determine if we have effectively done our job as the NCRSG.
6. I am committed to all duties required to be a member of the NCRSG. I understand the meetings schedule and am aware of the timeframes. Although this is not directly in my specific job duties, I want to insure the NCRSG has appropriate Native representation in the group structure. I believe it is essential for those deciding who will be a North

*Waa-saa-ghitlh-'a~ Wee-ni Naa-ch'aa-ghitlh-ni  
Our Heritage Is Why We Are Strong*

Coast Regional Stakeholder to know the importance of understanding the cultural diversity amongst the Northern California tribes and why we advocate that each coastal tribe directly influenced by this law be a stakeholder. As sovereign nations, it is not culturally appropriate for one tribe to speak for another and only done when given appropriate permission and specific context.

For the past 3 ½ years I have been our Tribe's Tribal Historic Preservation Officer (THPO). It is within this capacity that I have gained the experience of working with federal, state, local, and private entities. I am aware of the public process and familiar with federal and state legislation that affects Native people directly as well as our cultural, natural, and archaeological resources. As a THPO and a Native person, it is my responsibility to protect and preserve our tribal civil rights, customs, and culture. There are traditional practices that are conducted in conjunction with the ocean and marine life that fundamental in the balance of the earth and must continue to ensure that balance. If we were prevented from conducting these practices it would be devastating to our very essence. Our connection to the ocean does not have a monetary value as how can you put worth to a Nation's identity and core values. We must be able to continue to practice our sustenance gathering and harvesting with no interruption in and along our coastline. I am confident that I am a good candidate for a position on the Regional Stakeholder Group and will take this position seriously. I know I can work with the Initiative staff and others as I have already proven these abilities the past few months. I have computer skills and some experience working with GIS. Both skills I believe are important to be able to contribute to the Group.

Thank you for your time and consideration and look forward to working on the NCRSG.