Quileute Natural Resources.

QNR IS A DEPARTMENT OF THE QUILEUTE TRIBE.

The Quileute Tribe is a federally recognized Indian Tribe. It is a signatory of the Treaty of Olympia (January, 1856) with the Hoh Tribe and the Quinault Indian Nation. Headquarters for the Quileute are in La Push, Washington, at the mouth of the Quillayute River, on the Pacific Ocean.

In this wilderness location, just behind our offices, you can see tribal members fish for salmon or tribal boats enter the marina full of halibut or black cod. In the summer, bald eagles and brown pelicans are frequent visitors.

Below: A Bald Eagle Enjoys the River View.

Under The Treaty of Olympia, tribes reserved off-reservation rights to fish in "Usual and Accustomed Places" and to hunt or gather in "Open and Unclaimed Lands" within the treaty area, which extends hundreds of square miles beyond the reservations. On land, Quileute members can access some 850 square miles of watersheds for the fishery and a larger area for game and traditional plants. The fishing rights extend at least 40 miles seaward from the Pacific coast and are defined by court cases and federal regulations.

Quileute Natural Resources (QNR) exists to manage the treaty natural resources. Seven elected tribal officials of the Quileute Natural Resources Committee have policy oversight on all matters. Its technical staff manages the fishery (river and marine), the game, and the traditional plants. Our director presides over an in-house attorney/geologist, policy persons, several biologists, technical crew members, wildlife enforcement staff, and administrative personnel.

As **co-managers** of the off-reservation resources shared with non-Indians, we often travel to intergovernmental meetings to meet with state and federal resource management personnel. QNR administrative personnel keep track of tribal enrollment for treaty rights purposes. Besides field work discussed below, QNR develops the applicable ordinances, regulations, and contracts to manage the resources for tribal members.

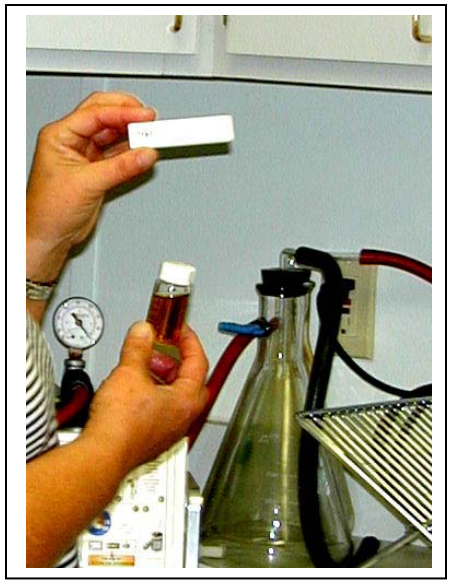
THE FOLLOWING WILL INTRODUCE YOU TO SOME OF OUR RESOURCE MANAGEMENT ACTIVITIES.

Commercial Fishing. Two important commercial marine stocks for us (currently) are Dungeness crab and groundfish. In-river salmon and steelhead (salmonid) fisheries are of high importance for economic and subsistence needs. The tribe has a small fleet of fishing vessels that regularly engage in the marine fishery. Some QNR biologists are dedicated to marine management issues such as allocation, appropriate seasons, and correct gear. Others are dedicated to wild salmon redd surveys, juvenile rearing assessments, and habitat restoration; for these projects, we work most often with state and tribal agencies. Many of these projects are funded by competitive grants from state and federal programs focusing on salmonid recovery, while others come out of the regular tribal budget. Our QNR elected committee provides guidance on policy for resource use and care.

Below: Commercial Halibut Fishing

Ceremonial and Subsistence Fishing. Salmonids are important for ceremonial and subsistence purposes ("C&S"). Although some commercial marine fishing takes place, the C&S river fishery is important, too.

Tribal members also harvest marine shellfish for C&S purposes. Since the shellfish may have toxic levels of harmful algal blooms, we have a marine biologist and technician who regularly monitor and test the shellfish for toxin levels and post warnings for the public when levels become dangerous for human consumption. These tests have been funded by grants from the BIA, EPA, and most currently, NOAA.



Above: Lab tests on centrifuged tissue of shellfish from our beaches.

Hatchery. The Tribe maintains a hatchery on its reservation for Chinook and steelhead; for Coho, the tribe works with state hatcheries off-reservation. We have a full-time hatchery manager as well as support staff.

Forestry. Quileute does not own significant timber acreage, but works closely with the timber landowners (state, private, and federal) on salmon habitat restoration projects and wildlife/gathering issues. Our Timber Fish Wildlife biologist must be apprised of all the forest practice regulations, as well as salmon recovery protocol. Our biologists, attorney, and policy personnel serve on a number of committees regarding timber harvests and their potential impacts on plant and animal resources, or water quality. We plan and join in a number of restoration projects with the landowners.

Above: A prefabricated bridge replaces a blocked culvert in the Quillayute River System, helping salmon migrate.

Wildlife. Quileute has received a number of grants (BIA, USFWS), to study local elk population numbers, health, and forage habits. Locally, elk do not yet show chronic wasting disease, but suffer from a number of other stresses related to hunting practices and available forage. Our data, combined with other studies, will help to adjust management protocol as needed.

Above: tribal members collar an anesthetized elk for herd population studies with the state.

We are also working with the Olympic Coast National Marine Sanctuary to keep track of beached birds (survey and provide data) and to train in oil spill response.

Gathering Rights. The Quileute Tribe is at the cutting edge, in developing its very own gathering regulations, to deal with management of "forest products"—the vegetation other than commercially important trees. These are experiencing pressure from the florist industry, so timber landowners desire to manage them. The tribe, having treaty rights to culturally important forest products and the legal right to manage its members, developed an ordinance and regulations, which have received recognition by state and federal agencies.

The tribe uses forest products not only for basketry and traditional cedar clothes (cedar bark source), but also for traditional carving (canoes, rattles, masks, etc.). We also need to cut and gather downed trees for firewood. Additionally, many products are used for food—berries, camas roots, and mushrooms, to name just some.

CONTACT US.

If you have questions about QNR, please don't hesitate to contact our staff. The main telephone menu is (360) 374-5695. We have a new web site at http://www.quileutetribe.org.