

Makah Tribe Office of Marine Affairs – Hershman Fellowship Host Application

Project Title: Furthering the Makah Tribe’s response to oil spills and other threats to coastal and marine resources

Host Organization

Makah Tribe Office of Marine Affairs, 1321 Bay View Avenue, Neah Bay, WA

Mentors

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Location

The Makah Tribe is located in Neah Bay, WA. The Fellowship location is flexible between Neah Bay, Port Angeles, and Seattle. Previous Seattle-based Fellows traveled to Neah Bay at least once a month to work with staff, leadership, and community in person – a vital component of the Fellowship with the Tribe. There may be opportunities for office space through Olympic Coast National Marine Sanctuary (Port Angeles) or The Nature Conservancy (Seattle).

Position Description Overview

The Makah Tribal Council is a trustee of coastal and marine resources that are critically important to our culture, economy, and the well-being of our people. Primary threats to coastal and marine resources include climate change and increasing vessel traffic and oil spill risk. These risks challenge the Tribal Council’s ability to uphold its shared trust responsibilities with the federal government. In response, the Makah Tribal Council has developed an ocean policy to facilitate coordination between natural resource managers as they work to deal with ocean management issues.

The 2023-2024 Makah Hershman Fellow will select at least one primary project based on their interests and the needs of the Office of Marine Affairs. Additionally, the Fellow will support on-going work related to vessel traffic safety, oil pollution prevention, climate resilience, and environmental policy in the Office of Marine Affairs. Through their work, the Fellow will be exposed to ocean policy, the process of government-to government consultation, and traditional ecological knowledge perspectives as part of marine planning and climate change adaptation.

Primary projects could include but are not limited to

- Identifying trends in oil spill drill outcomes to increase transparency for the spill response community and to support future oil spill policy engagement and development;
- Supporting efforts to pursue state permits for Port of Neah Bay priority projects that support oil spill preparedness and climate resilience;
- Developing communication materials and/or a monitoring plan for derelict vessel and structure removal efforts in Neah Bay;
- Developing a white paper and/or mapping tool on the overlap between oil pollution risk and climate change impacts focused on identifying key species and habitats at risk;

- Identifying community-based methodologies to incorporate community input into clean-up endpoints for oil spills; and
- Assisting in developing or updating climate resilience plans including the Ocean Acidification Action Plan, Climate Resilience Plan, and Recreation Management Strategy.

To support ongoing work the Office of Marine Affairs, the Fellow will

- Attend, track, and report out to staff on relevant regional oil spill, vessel traffic safety, and environmental forums such as the Regional Response Team, Puget Sound Harbor Safety Committee, Puget Sound Partnership Local Integrating Organization, etc.;
- Support implementation of the worklist as updated under the Memorandum of Agreement between the Tribe and the US Coast Guard;
- Assist staff in coordinating with research partners on the development of marine renewable energy feasibility projects in Neah Bay;
- Work with staff across departments to support policy development;
- Track relevant state and federal legislation and rulemaking and participate in developing comment letters, policy briefs, and information to support consultation as appropriate;
- Support engagement in regional marine planning and climate adaptation forums; and
- Collaborate with Makah Tribal staff to produce grant proposals, reports, presentations, and outreach efforts that support the above.

Networking and professional development opportunities

The Makah Tribe uniquely prepares our Fellows to lead environmental work at the state, federal, or private sector level because we provide a foundational understanding of treaty rights and how to engage with tribal sovereigns and co-managers. We support our Fellows in pursuing professional development opportunities that support their career goals and are happy to assist the Fellow in networking with our partners (examples listed below) as they are interested.

- Natural resource and fisheries agencies of tribal and First Nation governments
- Federal and state agencies including EPA, NOAA, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Washington Department of Ecology, Puget Sound Partnership, Coast Guard
- Maritime industry, including Port of Seattle, spill response contractors, and Maritime Blue
- Regional partnerships that address ocean health and planning including the West Coast Ocean Alliance and Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission
- Non-governmental organizations including The Nature Conservancy
- Academic groups including Climate Impacts Group and Washington Sea Grant