

ACES 2016 Pre-Conference Workshop
Monday, December 5, 2016 | 8:30am – 12:00pm

Title: *Linking Social-Ecological Systems & Community Empowerment to Ecosystem Services Concepts*

Description: This workshop will focus upon ways in which social-ecological systems and community empowerment are linked to ecosystem services concepts. The workshop highlights the need to analyze environmental change by using critical natural capital as a starting point to account for and govern natural capital and ecosystem services. Session approaches will focus upon identifying the ecological attributes and functions that are of particular importance in a given system where the attributes of natural capital of particular concern are environmental functions that: 1) cannot be substituted for by other functions (whether environmental or technological); or 2) functions whose loss would be irreversible; and/or 3) are functions whose loss would risk (or actually involve) losses that are too significant to be acceptable.

The workshop will provide examples which focus upon identifying the ecological features that are of ultimate concern or importance, the variables and features that are most relevant, and detailing how these socially important features are understood to change - e.g. in terms of trophic structures, species compositions, and/or the physiology of individual plant, fish, shellfish, or animal species, etc. Examples will highlight approaches involving prominent or culturally significant species, losses or changes in the availability of cultural keystone species, alterations in the abundance or productivity of cultural keystone species, and/or identifying and analyzing species that have experienced decline (as well as those that have not). Examples may underscore “small-scale” keystone species that are only recognized as having particular meaning to specific individuals, or families or clan groups; and/or highlight practices that cultures use to encourage the abundance of particular species (including taboos), as well as recommend habitat improvements, or utilize species as qualitative indicators of local ecosystem dynamics; and/or to highlight their knowledge regarding local species, or identify medicinal plant or animal species as well.

Techniques will underscore the need to view people and nature as constituting interdependent social-ecological systems that are inextricably linked, and to account for both natural capital and resilience principles within mutual decisions, and to use collaboration and goal-sharing involving environmental stewardship and social justice overall. Basic principles will promote using consensus to identify problems and their causes along with sustainable solutions, and to acknowledge thought collectives that share a particular thought style, and to utilize science to ‘assist in the process of governance’. Key points will include using multicultural perspectives to understand the different views and perceptions of others, and to form specific goals and solve specific problems, and to identify specific co-management interventions. Utilizing participatory approaches and exploring questions of common interest, searching for complementarities, identifying the scale or level of the problem, relating analyses to specific purposes and societal practices, using transdisciplinary research, and building the capacity to adapt to change, will each be promoted as well. The main points of the workshop will be to foster participation, collective action, social learning, and social sources of resilience, for the benefit of all.

Workshop Organizer

Jeffrey Thomas
Puyallup Tribe of Indians
6824 Pioneer Way East

Puyallup, WA 98424

jeffrey.thomas@puyalluptribe.com

253-405-7478