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College Corps: Community Service on Wiyot Land

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Community Service on Wiyot Land

Seth Beres, Giovanni Flores, Nick Salgado-Stanley, Marie Roberts & Rhiannon Lopez

Humboldt College Corps
23-24 AY Cohort
Serving the North Coast

#CaliforniansForAll
College Corps

INTRODUCTION

The Wiyot Tribe is a Native American tribe indigenous to the Humboldt Bay region in northern California. It engages in various activities focused on cultural preservation, environmental restoration, and community development.

LAND STEWARDSHIP

A key project that highlights Wiyot values is the “Sitka Spruce and Green Spruce Aphid Monitoring Program”. This program is developed to protect culturally significant plants on and off the reservation. This initiative is supported by Humboldt graduate and undergraduate students and does extensive research on the invasive species, Green Spruce Aphid and their implication to Humboldt’s ecology.

LAND-BACK

“Land back” for the Wiyot Tribe signifies reclaiming ancestral lands lost through colonization, enabling self-determination and sovereignty over their territories. It’s about restoring their cultural practices, stewardship, and connection to the land, fostering healing and revitalization of their identity as indigenous peoples.

RESTORATION

Shawir Darrudaluduk is the Wiyot name for natural resources and the name of the tribe’s restoration department. The department works in collaboration with the Mattole Restoration Council, California Department of Fish and Wildlife and others to restore native species to the Wiyot ancestral territory. One especially threatened species is the Western Lily (*Lilium occidentale*) whose range in the TBR Eco-Reserve has been extensively restored by Indigenous management, namely prescribed burns (see below).



COMMUNITY

The Wiyot Tribe embodies a tight-knit community, where shared values and traditions foster unity and resilience. Through mutual support and a deep connection to their ancestral lands, members uphold their cultural heritage with pride. Together, they cultivate a sense of belonging and solidarity that strengthens their tribe for generations to come.

CLIMATE ACTION

In addition to our other projects, we have also spearheaded the creation of the Tribe’s “Hilhuk Kunuvuk ‘Catching Lightning’ Energy Program” which has forged new pathways to energy independence and resilience. The program has focused on establishing a Tribal Utility Authority and building internal capacity through grants and education.

