



NATIONAL
ENDOWMENT
FOR THE
HUMANITIES

DIVISION OF PRESERVATION AND ACCESS

Narrative Section of a Successful Application

The attached document contains the grant narrative of a previously funded grant application. It is not intended to serve as a model, but to give you a sense of how a successful application may be crafted. Every successful application is different, and each applicant is urged to prepare a proposal that reflects its unique project and aspirations. Prospective applicants should consult the NEH Division of Preservation and Access application guidelines at <http://www.neh.gov/divisions/preservation> for instructions. Applicants are also strongly encouraged to consult with the NEH Division of Preservation and Access staff well before a grant deadline.

Note: The attachment only contains the grant narrative, not the entire funded application. In addition, certain portions may have been redacted to protect the privacy interests of an individual and/or to protect confidential commercial and financial information and/or to protect copyrighted materials.

Project Title: Preserving Karuk Collections from UV Light Damage

Institution: Karuk Tribe of California

Project Director: Carolyn Smith (April 2015 to December 2019); Joshua Saxon-Whitecrane (December 2019 to present)

Grant Program: Preservation Assistance Grants for Smaller Institutions

**NEH Preservation Assistance Grant for Smaller Institutions
Preserving Karuk Collections from UV Light Damage
Narrative**

A. What activity (or activities) would the grant support?

The National Endowment for the Humanities Preservation Assistance Grant will aid in preservation of the Karuk Tribe People's Center collections in Happy Camp, California through training on museum environmental controls and through the purchase and use of UV-filtered lights. The People's Center houses a significant archaeological and ethnographic collection, as well as a research library and archive.

In accordance with the recommendations presented in the 2008 Karuk Tribe People's Center Museum Conservation Assessment, performed by Thompson Conservation Laboratory, the People's Center Coordinator will:

- Attend a multi-day workshop, sponsored by The Campbell Center Historic Preservation Studies, located in Mount Carroll, Illinois. This workshop, *The Museum Environment*, will provide detailed information on monitoring and control of the museum environment, including the use of light meters and best practices for museum lighting.
- Purchase supplies to mitigate the UV (ultra violet) light damaging effects on the collections within the People's Center museum gallery and storage facility, based on the recommendations from *The Museum Environment* workshop.

Mitigating the damaging effects of UV within the People's Center museum is particularly important because our collection is used and studied by both the Karuk Tribe members and the broader research community.

B. What are the content and size of the humanities collections that are the focus of the project?

The Karuk Tribe People's Center collection contains a variety of ethnographic and archaeological objects. Lithic materials include ground stone objects such as mortars and pestles, fish weights, biface blades, projectile points, and ceremonial blades. Ceremonial regalia include dance necklaces (dentalium, beargrass braids, abalone, clam shells, pine nuts, glass beads), otter skin quivers, ritual arrows and bows, gambling drums, and deer skin dance dresses. An extensive photographic collection includes images from the late 19th century through modern times, with rare glass plate negatives of the White Deer Skin Dance, and photographs from family albums. The Karuk basketry collection includes basket caps, which are used for ceremony and work, eating and cooking baskets, cradles, gathering and storage baskets, tobacco baskets, and baskets made for the curio trade, including trinket baskets, table mats, wall pockets and more. The basketry collection numbers over 100 baskets from pre-1900 to contemporary works, including a recently repatriated collection of 39 baskets and other objects from the Benton County Historical Society and Museum, located in Philomath, Oregon. Lithic materials contain several hundred objects, including an important archaeological collection from an excavation from the May Site (CA-SIS-S7) that was repatriated by archaeologist Joseph Chartkoff. The collection is predicted to grow in the next few years from pending NAGPRA repatriation claims for sacred objects from several museums, including the Autry Museum and Peabody Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology, among others.

Karuk baskets are world renowned, with intricate designs and fine craftsmanship. This extraordinary tradition of Karuk basket weaving has been discussed by scholars since the 1900s and has extended through the present. Anthropologist Alfred Kroeber (1905) carried out the first in-depth study of basketry designs, assembling lists of design names among northwestern California Indian peoples. Lila O'Neale (1932) conducted an intensive ethnoaesthetic study of Karuk basket weaving in her dissertation-turned-book, *Yurok-Karok Basket Weavers*. Ethnobotanical studies are found in Sara Schenk and Edward Gifford's (1932) *Karuk Ethnobotany*. Linda Eisenhart (1981) presented a personal perspective of Karuk basket weaving using JP Harrington's work in the 1920s with Karuk medicine woman Phoebe Maddux. Kathy Heffner (1984) wrote of the key role of traditional ecological knowledge in obtaining important

basketry plants and medicines in *Following the Smoke: Contemporary Plant Procurement by the Indians of Northwest California*. Marvin Cohodas (1997) discusses the economic and social value of basketry for the most famous of Karuk weavers in *Basket Weavers for the California Curio Trade: Elizabeth and Louise Hickox*. Ron Johnson, Coleen Kelley Marks, and Susie Van Kirk (2012) conducted extensive historical and museum collection research, discussing the impacts of the Arts and Crafts Movement on Karuk weavers' styles, designs, and shapes of baskets in their book, *Made for the Trade*. Karuk baskets remain at the heart of scholarly research on California Indian basketry, so it is imperative to protect our collection and preserve it for future generations by controlling light damage.

Baskets play a key role in all aspects of ceremonial and daily life, and continue to be used and woven by Karuk people. Basket weavers were and are highly respected members of Karuk Society. The People's Center collection includes baskets from such renowned weavers as Grace and Madeline Davis, Lucy Henry, Florence Harrie, and contemporary weaver, Wilverna Reece. Of particular interest are finely woven ceremonial basket caps acquired by the tribe in the 1990s. These basket caps are in excellent condition and are *danced* in annual World Renewal ceremonies. The basket cradle with sun visor, made by Madeline Davis, is an exceptional example of a type still used by Karuk mothers. The large storage basket, made by Lucy Henry, is another fine sample of the extraordinary workmanship and artistry by Karuk basket weavers.

Ceremonial regalia have been used since time immemorial in the World Renewal ceremonies, known as *pikyavish* (to-fix-the-world). The People's Center is responsible for caring for the few remaining ceremonial objects in our aboriginal territories that are not held in private collections. Represented are ceremonial blades of obsidian; otter skin quivers; dance dresses made of deer skin, pine nuts, abalone and other materials; dentalium shell necklaces for both men and women. These regalia are sacred to Karuk people and are cared for with great respect and strict cultural protocols. After nearly a century of carefully guarded memory, Karuk people are once again publicly performing ancient ceremonies, bringing the natural and social world back into balance. The People's Center collection is a key component to revitalizing and bringing these traditions to contemporary culture.

Honoring Native perspectives, objects in the collection are considered *living spirits* and *respected relatives*. This approach has informed the People's Center loan policies for ceremonial use, the cultural protocols that guide care and display, and the responsibility for long-term stewardship of the collection. To allow deterioration and damage from high UV and IR light levels would forsake this tribal and public trust.

The collection is also a source of pride and well-being for Karuk people. Connection to the objects, and to their creators, offers continuity and remembrance to the many local community members frequenting the People's Center. Recognizing baskets and regalia made by known relative, viewing designs and skills long part of a family tradition, serves to spark memory and dialog. The stories told as a result of experiencing the People's Center collection in turn becomes a part of the enduring Karuk heritage and our national experience.

C. How are these humanities collections used?

The People's Center functions as the hub of Karuk cultural life, providing access to appreciate, study, and learn ongoing cultural lifeways and skills. The collection provides a research tool for classes, basket weaver gatherings, research and cultural revitalization. Select objects are available for ceremonial and educational loans, including the popular "Museum in a box" program that brings the collection into the classrooms. "Museum in a Box" provides presentations on Karuk tangible and intangible culture that incorporates State curriculum standards and specific school district needs. Content is tailored for age level, geographic location, and the individual classroom. Collection objects are utilized to support language learning, land management decision making, critical thinking, and historical memory.

The collection at the People's Center is a valuable educational tool for the broader community. Both process and product are sources of information for Karuk history and contemporary issues. Baskets can be read as palimpsests for the cultural biographies reflected in their uses through time. Those made for the curio trade reflect the introduction of market economy following contact, adaptive abilities of

Indian people, influences from early collectors in rural Northern California, Native art as commodity, and land management policies that impacted plant resources in Karuk territory. Ceremonial blades offer a view into important trade routes and tribal networks for obsidian sources in eastern California, Southern Oregon, and Western Nevada.

The repatriation of the May Site (CA-SIS-S7) collection is an important addition to the archaeological materials in the collection. This was one of the few professional excavations conducted in Karuk ancestral territories. It is very unlikely that other archaeological investigations will be conducted in the future; in all probability the only archaeology conducted will be the result of cultural resource management to mitigate development projects. Therefore this collection is of utmost importance for any academic research on early lifeways of Karuk people. The significance of this collection is underscored by its context—the May site is on the border between Karuk and Shasta cultures and could provide important information on shared material culture traits and trade networks for acquisition of obsidian. Obsidian hydration and sourcing could add important information to regional and tribal history before contact.

A recent collaborative project focused on land management issues along the Klamath River and created the *Karuk Lands Management Historical Timeline* <http://karuktimeline.wordpress.com/>. Developed over a nine-month period in 2009-2010 by a group of UC Berkeley students, with support from the Karuk Department of Natural Resources and the Karuk-UC Berkeley Collaborative, the timeline is an educational resource for learning about the history of lands management on Karuk Aboriginal Territory in the mid-Klamath region. The timeline is widely distributed and is one example of how the Center collection can be used as part of large research projects and initiatives. Local students were encouraged to visit the People's Center collection and to create artwork for the timeline. The resulting banner is displayed in the People's Center and at the Clarke Historical Museum in Eureka, California, and is easily downloaded by teachers for classroom instruction.

Karuk language speakers have used the Center's collection to spark learning and discussion for language classes, a previously funded ANA master-apprentice program and Speakers' Circles, where elders came together to speak Karuk. These groups have had the opportunity to work with materials in the collection, eliciting memories, stories, and long forgotten Karuk terms for these objects. Lively discussions often ensued, involving different interpretations, new pronunciations, and the inevitable Karuk penchant for laughter and teasing.

Finally, the People's Center receives numerous requests from student researchers and community members for information on Karuk culture and history. The collection is a valuable resource for those who are working to stitch together the often-scattered information on Karuk life before, during, and after contact. For some, this is a passion for coming to terms with the past, for others this is a way to reconnect with who they are as Karuk people, for the non-native community the collection is yet another clue in our larger regional heritage.

D. What is the nature and mission of your institution?

The mission of the Karuk Tribe People's Center is: "As the museum and cultural center of the Karuk Tribe, the Karuk People's Center is devoted to the preservation, promotion, and celebration of Karuk history, language, traditions, and living culture." The rich heritage and cultural life of the Karuk people is, therefore, best described as living and dynamic. The Karuk Tribe honors and learns from the past, yet at the same time, embraces the future, recognizing that culture is process. Basket weaving and regalia-making are enduring traditions that resonate with contemporary culture. They are multi-dimensional—personal and public, spiritual and economic, creative and functional. Material culture is part of the more intangible and endures because it matters to Karuk people, and the People's Center remains relevant by supporting the goals outlined by Karuk people.

The Karuk Tribe People's Center is a 5,500 square foot facility at the Karuk Tribal Administrative Complex in Happy Camp, California. The building was constructed in 2002 with Indian Community Development Block Grant funding, and includes the museum, library, and archive, a gift shop, Karuk language office, and culture classroom. The People's Center is open to the public Monday

through Saturday, from 9:30 AM to 5:00 PM. Classes held at the People's Center are also open to the public, and are often scheduled during evenings or on Sundays.

The operational budget for the People's Center is \$25,000. Center operations have been augmented by grant-funded projects in the past and we have applied for FY2015 the IMLS Basic Library Grant for \$7,000; a two-year IMLS Library Enhancement Grant for \$150,000; the IMLS Native American/Native Hawaiian Museum Services Grant for \$50,000; and the NAGPRA consultation and documentation grant for \$90,000. The People's Center employs one full-time director and two part-time gift shop clerks. Based on successful grant applications from IMLS, we will be hiring one part-time librarian. The People's Center is supervised by the Karuk Tribe Chairman and is guided by the volunteer People's Center Advisory Committee.

E. Has your institution ever had a preservation or conservation assessment or consultation?

The Karuk Tribe People's Center received a CAP assessment in 2008 through the Thompson Conservation Laboratory, located in Portland, Oregon. The Executive Summary highlighted issues of HVAC filtration, supports for the dugout canoe, removal of insect attractors, and the construction of a secure storage area for gift shop inventory. It also noted that the collection needed to be accessioned and a disaster preparedness plan be drafted. The majority of these issues have been resolved. Through an IMLS NANH grant, the collection has been accessioned and through an NEH grant, the disaster plan has been drafted. As we address the recommendations outlined in the CAP assessment, deterioration and damage caused by UV emissions from fluorescent lighting has not been addressed.

F. What is the importance of this project to your institution?

The objects in the People's Center collection and archive are important to research of past lifeways and continuing ceremonial practices. Since much of the Karuk material culture was removed from its makers and stewards, the items that we have here in Karuk territory are of great value for keeping this lineage intact. Karuk people feel a close connection to the *living spirits* of these objects and are charged with caring for them in a good way. In Karuk culture, all life is interconnected and people have a responsibility to keep the world in balance through stewardship, sustainability, and reciprocity.

Training, provided by The Campbell Center in Mount Carroll, Illinois, will give the People's Center Coordinator the necessary knowledge and skills to be able to monitor and control the People's Center museum and archive environment, in general, and light levels that can adversely affect museum collections, more specifically. Lab sections during the multi-day workshop will allow the Coordinator to learn how to effectively use light meters and indicator strips, among other things, which are vitally important to addressing collection preservation needs.

According to our 2008 CAP assessment, our collections are vulnerable to deterioration and damage from UV emissions from fluorescent lighting used in both the museum gallery and the collection storage space. Many of our objects are on permanent display for the public to view and research. Our extensive basket collection is particularly vulnerable to deterioration and damage from UV light exposure, which causes fading and color changes, particularly to dyed basket materials. Over time, the finely woven and intricate designs may begin to disappear. Since our 2008 CAP assessment, the lighting within the gallery is on the higher end of acceptable levels. Lighting levels have not been monitored since then, so having the equipment necessary to perform periodic monitoring will be of benefit to remain vigilant against UV exposure. With the addition of UV filters to our fluorescent lights that are in both the gallery and storage area, we can ensure that we are protecting our culturally important and culturally sensitive collections from light deterioration. Additionally, the purchase of storage boxes for our most fragile collections will effectively block all light, preserving the objects for many, many years to come.

G. What are the names and qualifications of the consultant(s) and staff involved in the project?

Carolyn Smith –People’s Center Coordinator and Project Director. Ms. Smith is a Karuk Tribal descendant and holds a Master’s Degree in Anthropology. She is the People’s Center Coordinator, the Karuk Tribe’s cultural center and museum, and also oversees the Happy Camp Tribal Library. As a PhD Candidate in Anthropology, she conducts extensive research in archives and museum collections. Her research focuses on how Karuk basket weaving practices has been and remains to be a vital, living part of Karuk culture, integrated in memory, history, ecological knowledge and language. Bringing this expertise to the People’s Center, she is highly invested in creating a sustainable museum and archive for future generations.

Sammi Offield — Contract Compliance Specialist. As the Contracts Compliance Specialist, and Karuk tribal member, Ms. Offield assists the Karuk Tribe in ensuring that all contracts and grants are managed in accordance with specified terms and conditions, the Karuk Tribe Fiscal Policy, OMB Super Circular and the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR). Ms. Offield is a key participant in the Tribal programs’ budgeting process. The Karuk Tribe has remained a low risk auditee.

H. What is the plan of work for the project?

- January 2016
 - Award notification
- June 2016
 - Attend workshop—*The Museum Environment*
 - Campbell Center, Historic Preservation Studies, 203 East Seminary, Mount Carroll, IL 61053
- July-August 2016
 - Develop quarterly worksheet to monitor UV light levels in People’s Center museum gallery and storage area
 - Purchase light meter
 - Implement first of the quarterly monitoring of UV light levels in People’s Center museum gallery and storage area
 - Purchase UV light filters for fluorescent tube lighting in museum gallery and storage area
 - Purchase storage boxes for fragile collection objects
- August-October 2016
 - Work with Karuk Tribe maintenance crew to install UV filter tubes on existing lighting and LED bulbs to replace non-tubular fluorescent light bulbs
 - Store fragile objects in storage boxes in storage area
 - Implement second quarterly monitoring of UV light levels in People’s Center museum gallery and storage area
- January 2017
 - Implement third quarterly monitoring of UV light levels in People’s Center museum gallery and storage area
 - Adjust (add or remove) LED light bulbs and UV filtered fluorescent tubes as needed
- April 2017
 - Implement fourth quarterly monitoring of UV light levels in People’s Center museum gallery and storage area
 - Adjust (add or remove) LED light bulbs and UV filtered fluorescent tubes as needed
- May 2017
 - Project Complete