

# URGE

## Unlearning Racism in Geoscience

WWU Geology Department

---

### URGE Policies for Working with Communities of Color for University/Organization - Deliverable for Unit 4

This is what was found by the URGE pod at Western Washington University on Policies for Working with Communities of Color as well as plans for improved processes and/or needed resources.

- **Audit of previous interactions with communities of color at our organization:**
  - Faculty and students provided reflections on a variety of experiences with differing levels of local communities of color involvement (in the US and internationally) that ranged from full community involvement to no community involvement.
  - Following sharing of experience we held a group discussion of how semi- and non-collaborative projects could have benefitted from more respectful and meaningful interactions with communities of color.
  - Some faculty expressed guilt or embarrassment in their lack of involvement with local communities and communities of color.
  - Many members in the department do local field work, on the native territory of local indigenous tribes (most frequently the Lummi and Nooksack, though there are many tribes in our region). We identified interactions with the tribes as the most common (missed) opportunity.
  
- **What worked well in these interactions?**
  - Long-term collaboration with local researchers that can aid in outreach to the community, and include involvement of local students of color, as well as compensation for any work done by local community members.
  - Long-term collaborations that allow researchers to learn more about and cater to community needs and designate appropriate resources to the community.
  - Collaboration with local researchers and students increase knowledge exchange and have the potential to provide long-term career benefits for all involved.
  
- **What did not work well, and how can this be better addressed in future plans?**
  - ⊘ Some past projects did not include involvement of local community members. This can be addressed in current and future projects by researching history of study area and reaching out/communicating with local communities of color, specifically in pre-planning stages to ensure full involvement and establish meaningful and beneficial relationships.
  - ⊘ An important point of discussion centered around the long-term requirements for building adequate and meaningful relationship with communities of color (or any local



## Unlearning Racism in Geoscience

communities). This is a crucial step in successful implementation of future collaborations with communities.

- **Are there ways to improve the outcome of projects already undertaken?**
  - ☒ Research the history of the land and local communities where work is being conducted.
  - ☒ Where possible, work with and compensate community members to translate research results and outreach materials into local language(s).
  - ☒ Design long-term plans to work with members of the community.
  - ☒ Incorporate community needs into research questions.
  - ☒ Include community and land acknowledgements and traditional ecological knowledge into coursework when relevant.
  - ☒ Include community and land acknowledgements in forthcoming publications and presentations.
  
- **Are there specific resources or guidelines that are needed to improve the process for planning ahead and working with communities of color?**

The pod has determined that an important first step for our Geology Department at WWU is to connect with the WWU Tribal Liaison to the President, Laural Ballew. A meeting has been scheduled with her on April 2<sup>nd</sup>. The pod also determined that the department needed a 1) formal “best-practices” worksheet for faculty, staff, and students related to working with communities of color and/or local and indigenous communities, and 2) a contact information sheet with information on how to contact and communicate with local indigenous tribes and communities. These documents will be updated after discussions with Laural Ballew.

### 1) Western Washington University Geology Department recommended protocols for working with communities of color

*\* AWAITING FEEDBACK ON DRAFT OF DOCUMENT FROM WWU TRIBAL LIAISON, LAURAL BALLEW \**

### 2) PNW Tribes Resource List

**Traditional ecological knowledge (TEK)** – For the “western science” community, this concept (among others) is of critical importance as it represents generations of knowledge passed along through a variety of cultural sharing ways (e.g., stories, songs, etc.). Many federal and state organizations have begun to incorporate TEK into research and education, instead of solely relying upon scientific methodologies, as these two ideologies are often complimentary.



## Unlearning Racism in Geoscience

**Each tribe is sovereign** – It is important to point out that members of tribes, first nations, and other indigenous communities throughout North America are each members of sovereign, unique, self-governed communities. In the news, for example, one might hear about “the tribes” being involved in some sort of state or federal policy issue (e.g., something related to fisheries, etc.). This can lead to the incorrect view of all tribes and tribal members as being one and the same. In reality, individual tribes may be at odds with one another, just as much as any other group or organization might be. Each tribe is unique with their own set of stories, history, and culture.

**Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission** – Natural resources management support service organization for 20 treaty Indian tribes in western Washington (<https://nwifc.org/>)

**Affiliated Tribes of NW Indians** – Nonprofit organization representing 57 northwest tribal governments from Oregon, Idaho, Washington, southeast Alaska, Northern California and Western Montana (<https://atntribes.org>)

- ATNI not only deals with natural resources issues, but also policy and energy issues. They do have a regional tribal climate resilience liaison who works with UW and USGS:
  - o Chas Jones ([cejones@usgs.gov](mailto:cejones@usgs.gov))

**Washington State Governor’s Office Tribal Directory** – Directory for federally recognized and non-federally recognized tribes in WA state (<https://goia.wa.gov/tribal-directory>)

- Also contains tribal contact information, a list of tribal newspapers, colleges, courts, museums, tribal organizations, and more

### **Tribal Resources**

#### *Tribes in the Bellingham area*

- Lummi Nation – (<https://www.lummi-nsn.gov/>)
- Nooksack Indian Tribe Natural and Cultural Resources Department (<https://nooksacktribe.org/>)

#### *Tribes in the Anacortes/Skagit Area*

- Samish Tribe – (<https://www.samishtribe.nsn.us/>)
- Swinomish Tribe – (<https://swinomish-nsn.gov/>)
- Upper Skagit Tribe – (<https://upperskagittribe-nsn.gov/>)
- Sauk-Suiattle – (<http://www.sauk-suiattle.com/>)
- Stillaguamish Tribe – (<https://www.stillaquamish.com/>)

#### *Tribes in the Olympic Peninsula*

- Hoh Tribe – (<https://hohtribe-nsn.org/culture/>)
- Lower Elwha Klallam Tribe – (<https://www.elwha.org/>)
- Makah Tribe – (<https://makah.com/>)
- Quileute Tribe – (<https://quileutenation.org/>)
- Quinault Tribe – (<http://www.quinaultindiannation.com/>)



## Unlearning Racism in Geoscience

- Skokomish Tribe – (<https://www.skokomish.org/>)
- Jamestown S’Klallam Tribe Natural Resources – One of the PNPTC member Tribes on the Olympic Peninsula (<https://jamestowntribe.org/>)
  - Point No Point Treaty Council (PNPTC) – is a tribal consortium that offers scientific and natural resources management expertise on behalf of the Jamestown S’Klallam Tribe and the Port Gamble S’Klallam Tribe. In addition, PNPTC also work with many other tribal organizations and Puget Sound area tribes on various projects.

### *Tribes in the Kitsap Peninsula*

- Port Gamble S’Klallam Tribe – One of the PNPTC member Tribes on Kitsap Peninsula (<https://www.pgst.nsn.us/>)
- Suquamish Tribe – (<https://suquamish.nsn.us/>)

### *Tribes in the Everett Area*

- Snohomish Tribe – (<https://snohomishtribe.org/about>)
- Tulalip Tribes – (<https://www.tulaliptribes-nsn.gov/>)

### *Tribes in the Seattle Area*

- Duwamish Tribe – (<https://www.duwamishtribe.org/>)
- Muckleshoot Tribe – (<http://www.muckleshoot.nsn.us/>)
- Nisqually Tribe – (<http://www.nisqually-nsn.gov/>)
- Snoqualmie Tribe – (<https://www.snoqualmieltribe.us/>)
- Suquamish Tribe – (<https://suquamish.nsn.us/>)

## University Resources

- Western Washington University Tribal Relations – (<https://www.wwu.edu/tribal-relations>)
- Laural Ballew - American Indian/Alaska Native and First Nations Relations Executive Director and Tribal Liaison
    - o Tribal Lands Statement / land acknowledgement: <https://www.wwu.edu/tribal-lands-statement>

- University of Washington Native Life and Tribal Relations – (<https://www.washington.edu/diversity/tribal-relations/>)

- Iisaaksiichaa Ross Braine - Tribal Liaison, Office of Minority Affairs and Diversity (University of WA)
  - o Info about Iisaaksiichaa and his role at UW: <https://thewholeu.uw.edu/2017/03/03/staff-story-iisaaksiichaa-braine/>

- Northwest Indian College – Accredited tribal college serving Washington, Oregon, and Idaho (<https://www.nwic.edu/>)

- Main campus is located on the Lummi Indian Reservation near Bellingham

# **URGE**

**Unlearning Racism in Geoscience**