

Karuk Tribe

Tribal Government Profile and Summary

2020

Status

The Karuk Tribe is Federally Recognized. The Karuk Tribe's government-to-government relationship with the US Federal Government was established in 1851. However, the lack of formal contact with the Spanish according to the terms of the Treaty of Limits (1828) and the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo (1848), left the United States' jurisdiction over Karuk lands dubious, and it continues to be disputed today. In 1851, Karuk tribal people met with the Redick McKee US Senate delegation, and participated in treaties signed in Weitchpec, Somes Bar, and near the mouth of the Scott River. That government-to-government relationship continues to the present day; however, there was a reduction and eventual termination of services following WWII and during the termination era of the 1950's. Federal Recognition was reaffirmed by the Bureau of Indian Affairs officially in January of 1979. The Tribe's Constitution was adopted on April 6th, 1985, with amendments adopted July 19th, 2008.

Land Base

The Karuk Tribe is a historic tribe, and still lives in its ancestral homelands along the middle part of the Klamath River channel - roughly between Weitchpec and Seiad, California. The Karuk Ancestral Territory spans 1,053,600 acres or 1,646 square miles (planar measurement). Since our treaties were not ratified by congress, the Tribe was not granted a reservation either in 1851 or in 1979. But starting in 1977 the Tribe began purchasing property for the benefit of our tribal members, starting with 6.6 acres in the Orleans community and 10.65 acres in Happy Camp. The Happy Camp property was designated a "Proclaimed Reservation" in 1989. The Tribe has worked hard to accumulate more Trust land over the years. The current total is 914 acres of Trust land, and 822 acres of Fee land. These acres are held mostly within the communities of Orleans, Happy Camp, and Yreka. These centers are a considerable distance apart: it is 47 road miles from Orleans to Happy Camp, and 120 road

miles from Orleans to Yreka. Historical and anthropological work has demonstrated a strong connection with the Yreka area, in pre-contact times through to the present day. In the Karuk language, the three main population centers have the ancient names of Panámniik for Orleans; Athithúvuunupma for Happy Camp; and Kahtishraam for Yreka.

Tribal Government

The Tribe currently has 3,751 Enrolled Tribal Members, making it the second-largest tribe in California. There are about 5,000 registered descendants. In June of 1978 the office of the Secretary of the Interior instructed the Tribe to consolidate the three existing councils, in Orleans, Happy Camp, and Yreka, into a single unified government. Orleans, Happy Camp, and Yreka have become the three Council Districts. Monthly Council meetings rotate between these locations, so each District hosts a meeting on a quarterly basis. In addition, there are monthly Health Board Meetings, Tribal Council Planning Meetings, and Special Meetings to accommodate the wide variety of departments and services under the Karuk Tribe's operation.

Tribal Council

The Tribal Council consists of nine members. The Executive Council consists of the Chair, the Vice-Chair, and the Secretary-Treasurer. There are six members-at-large on the Council, two from each district. Seats on the Council are open to Tribal members who are over 18, have lived near the Ancestral territory for the last six months, and who pass standard background checks. Council members are elected by the membership, and serve four-year staggered terms.

Staff

The Karuk Tribe has nearly 500 staff members, (currently 260 tribal employees, 42 in housing, 41 in KCDC, and 142 in the casino). There are numerous departments, spread across the three Council District centers. The Administrative Center in Happy Camp houses the Fiscal Department, Human Resources, Enrollment, Grant Writing, Self-Governance, Maintenance, TERO, Education, Information Technology, Health Services, the People's Center (Museum, Gift Shop and Smoke Shop), a Dental Clinic and a Medical Clinic. Other offices in

Happy Camp include the Karuk Tribe Housing Authority, the Karuk Community Development Corporation, Child and Family Services, TANF, Head Start, and a Nutrition Center. Two departments based in Orleans are the Department of Natural Resources and the Department of Transportation. Land Management, Office of General Counsel, the Rain Rock Casino, the Gaming Authority and the Gaming Commission are based in Yreka. All three District locations have Medical Clinics and Dental Services, TANF, Victim Services, Child and Family Services, IT, Housing, and Maintenance.

Services

Independent Operations of the Karuk Tribe:

The Tribe has established the Karuk Community Development Corporation, which was chartered on July 24th, 1994. The KCDC board comprises seven members.

The Karuk Tribe established a TDHE (Tribally-Designated Housing Entity). The Karuk Tribe Housing Authority (KTHA) oversees housing services, and is headquartered on Jacobs Way in Happy Camp, CA. The KTHA Board of Commissioners comprises seven members.

The Karuk Tribe developed and established a gaming enterprise called the Rain Rock Casino. It opened in April 2018, and is located on trust land off Sharps Road in Yreka, CA, near I-5.

Committees

Council Members, Commissioners, Committee Members and appointed representatives serve on several commissions and committees including the following:

Election Committee: oversees Tribal Elections

TERO Commission: oversees employee rights issues.

ICWA Committee: oversees matters of child welfare and care.

Education Committee: oversees the Education department and student needs.

Health Board: The Tribal Council serves in this capacity, and oversees health services for the Tribe.

Housing Board of Commissioners: oversees Tribal Housing

KCDC Board: oversees the operations of the Karuk Community Development Corporation.

The Karuk Resources Advisory Board: delegated by Council to make recommendations on Cultural Resources issues and to oversee the Tribal Historic Preservation Office.

People's Center Committee: oversees the activities in the Peoples Center museum in Happy Camp.

Gaming Commission: is the regulatory body of the gaming enterprise.

Gaming Authority: oversees the operations of the gaming enterprise and any economic enterprise arising out of gaming revenue.

Enrollment Committee: oversees compliance with the Karuk Tribe's Enrollment Ordinance.

Judicial Committee: oversees and supports the Judicial Systems of the Karuk Tribe.

Yav Pa Anav Wellness Forum: oversees and supports wrap-around services with identified representatives from several departments.

Address

The Address of the Karuk Tribe is:

P. O. Box 1016,

64236 Second Avenue,

Happy Camp, CA 96039

Telephone:

(530) 493-1600

Maps

1. Karuk Aboriginal Territory
2. Karuk Service Area
3. Karuk AB52 (CEQA) consultation area.