

## **TIOGA APPENDIX: HUMAN USES OF THE TIOGA CREEK SUBWATERSHED**

### **THE TIOGA CREEK SUBWATERSHED**

The location of this subwatershed is significant for human use throughout both historic and prehistoric times. This north-south trending subwatershed links two major river systems (the Coos and the Coquille) in several ways. These include transportation routes between the 2 watersheds today and probably travel routes in prehistoric times.

While the Tioga Creek subwatershed drains northward into the South Fork Coos River Watershed, those streams abutting it directly to the south and west drain into the Coquille River system. Streams to the south of the Tioga Creek Subwatershed (such as Brummit and Deadhorse Creeks) drain into the East Fork Coquille River, while streams to the west (particularly Middle Creek) drain into the North Fork Coquille River. The headwaters of the North Fork Coquille River also abut the Tioga Creek Subwatershed to its northwest.

Above the confluence of Tioga Creek and the South Fork Coos River, the main channel is known as the Williams River. While the Tioga Creek Subwatershed itself drains into the South Fork Coos River, streams directly to the east of the Tioga Creek Subwatershed drain into Williams River, which is the other major tributary to the South Fork Coos.

### **Native Peoples, Tribal Uses and Treaty Rights**

Tribal distribution maps show the Tioga Creek Subwatershed to be within the ethnographic territory of the Hanis Coos tribe (see Beckham 1977:36). The descendants of this tribe are now part of the Confederated Tribes of Coos, Lower Umpqua & Siuslaw Indians.

Before The 1830s, Native peoples had been residing in the general vicinity for several thousand years in relative isolation. Two branches of the Coos (Miluk and Hanis) were living in the areas around Coos Bay, the Lower Umpqua (Kalawatset) were living in the Umpqua estuary as far east as Elk Creek, and the Siuslaw were likewise living throughout the Siuslaw watershed. Euro-American introduced diseases swept through southwest Oregon during that decade, resulting in nearly incomprehensible casualties (estimates range up to 95% mortality) and subsequent dramatic changes in the survivors way-of-life.

The confederation of these three groups began when they were considered a single unit during treaty negotiations with the federal government in 1855. They agreed to cede their lands in exchange for a large reservation and guarantees of social services. Although Supt. Joel Palmer was authorized by the President to sign treaties negotiated during these councils for the federal government, Congress never acted to ratify them, and so the status of these agreements has been a source of conflict ever since.

Although the Coos never became involved in the coastal phase of the Rogue Indian War in 1856, at its conclusion they were removed to the Umpqua Sub-Agency at Fort Umpqua (on the North Spit of the Umpqua River), where they were held with the Kalawatset until 1859. As Beckham (1995) relates, they were “removed to Yachats on the Alsea Sub-Agency and introduced [to] a compulsory agriculture program. In 1875 Congress opened the Alsea Sub-Agency to Euro-American settlement. The surviving Indians were driven from the lands they had cleared and attempted to farm.” Tribal members eventually returned south to their homeland, and today the Confederated Tribes maintains offices and their reservation in the Coos Bay/North Bend area.

The Confederated Tribes of Coos, Lower Umpqua & Siuslaw Indians is a federally recognized Indian tribe, after being restored on October 17, 1984 by P.L. 98-481. The specific rights which the tribe (or individual tribal members) possess are not yet totally resolved. Beckham (1995) states:

*Because of the lack of compensation for the taking of their aboriginal lands and lack of a ratified treaty of land cession, the Confederated Tribes have alleged their aboriginal rights to fish, hunt, and gather remain intact. P.L. 98-481 noted: “This Act shall not grant or restore any hunting, fishing, or trapping right of any nature, including any indirect or procedural right or advantage, to any member of the Tribe, nor shall any presumption be created by this Act to the existence or non-existence of such rights.”*

However, there are also Executive Orders, laws and statutes which may confer rights on the Tribes. The nature and extent of these aboriginal rights still is still being resolved within federal legal and political structures. As elsewhere in southwestern Oregon, tribal and treaty rights in the Tioga Creek Subwatershed probably center around three general issues; land transfer, resource acquisition and cultural heritage protection.

Federal legislation aimed at protection and preservation of significant archeological sites addresses tribal interests in cultural heritage protection. However, the identification of land with “traditional cultural properties” can be made on the basis of oral tradition rather than physical evidence, and therefore could involve properties in this Subwatershed without physical evidence of cultural importance. As of this time, the Confederated Tribes have not suggested that such resources occur on BLM lands within the Coast Range, but that potential does exist. It is only through consultation with the Confederated Tribes that we can determine whether any “traditional cultural properties” exist in this Subwatershed.

The existence and extent of Native American rights to “usual and accustomed” places for resource acquisition (hunting, fishing and gathering) on public lands is an issue which continues to be addressed in ongoing court cases. Specific resources utilization and locations in the Tioga Creek subwatershed are not known at this time. However, the District does engage in periodic consultation with the Confederated Tribes concerning the activity plans of both organizations. Concerns about planned activities affecting resource utilization should become evident as a result of such contacts.

#### **Prehistoric Resource Use**

Areas containing potential traditional Tribal resources are the most likely to be affected by requests for “usual and accustomed” access. An general discussion of Coos prehistoric subsistence patterns provides some information concerning likely resources.

The Coos made extensive use of the tidal flats. They gathered numerous mollusks and crustaceans, especially during the late winter/early spring minus tides. Smelt also was an important food source obtained from some ocean beaches.

In late spring (May/June) the able-bodied tribal members left their coastal/estuary winter villages for the upper reaches of Coos Bay and the limit of tidewater along the Coos River, where they obtained eels and the spring anadromous fish run. Eels were trapped. Salmon also were trapped, speared and hooked. Many were smoked and dried for later use.

During the summer months, fishing and gathering were the most important activities. The streams and estuaries provided various non-anadromous fish throughout the summer. Camas and other root crops were gathered, both from meadows along the coast and inland (particularly Camas Valley). Many of these resources also were dried and stored for future use.

With the abundance of other resources, there was no necessity to actively hunt deer or elk (Beckham and Minor 1980). Instead, the Coos caught most of their elk in deadfalls. These traps were large pits, some nearly ten feet deep, with pointed stakes extending upwards from their bottom. They were dug along game trails and carefully camouflaged. Since the creation of these pit traps would have been a relatively time-consuming activity, it seems likely that they would be reused, so that this trapping activity would tend to reoccur in the same place every year. This suggests that land mammal hunting did not normally involve mobile hunting parties stalking or ambushing game anywhere throughout vast sections of forest (Beckham and Minor 1980). More likely, they repeatedly visited the same series of pit locations to see what “dropped in”, much as modern trappers check their trap lines.

In the fall, the anadromous fish runs were again available. As well, numerous types of berries became ripe. Blueberries, and black and red huckleberries were gathered in sand dunes along the coast, and small strawberries were found in coastal meadows. On the forest margin, blackberries, thimbleberries, salmonberries and western blackcaps were obtained. With the onset of the winter rains in late fall, people again returned to their coastal villages where they lived until the spring fishing again started the cycle of the seasons.

## Archaeological Resources

Although the federal guidelines cited above indicate maps be produced showing "...the location of important human uses such as cultural sites...", the location of archeological resources is a protected class of information, and not subject to Freedom of Information laws. This is because of the potential to damage these non-renewable resources. Therefore, maps showing specific site locations are not provided in this public document. Instead, the following presents an inventory of known Native American cultural resources in this Subwatershed without specific locations:

- Seasonally occupied hunting/fishing camp  
There is one site in this Subwatershed. It is on private land adjacent to a large falls. Although considerably damaged by road construction and looting, exposures have shown the cultural deposit to be at least one meter (about 3 feet) deep.
- Hunting stations  
There are two sites recorded. Both are on BLM land, on stream side benches bordering small springs. One has been badly disturbed by the use of the area as a logging camp. The second has been disturbed by timber harvest, scarification and replanting activities.
- Rockshelter  
There is one unrecorded site reported in the Subwatershed. Rockshelters with human habitation are relatively rare in the Coast Range. They contain the potential to be very important archeological properties, as they can preserve a more complete record of prehistoric activities than open sites.
- Isolated artifacts  
There are three locations in the Subwatershed, all on BLM land. Although each location indicates prehistoric use, in these instances there was not a sufficient quantity of cultural material discovered to classify the location as a "site."

The following Euro-American cultural resources are reported in the District historic sites inventory, but little is known about their exact location or present condition:

- Mining  
One coal mine is reported. It is located on BLM land in the Burnt Creek area.
- Fish rearing ponds  
The earthworks for the rearing ponds are located on BLM land along Burnt Creek, near its confluence with Tioga Creek.
- Forest camps  
Five logging camps are reported. Two camps, neither on BLM land, are near the mouth of Tioga Creek. Two others are upstream along Tioga Creek, near the mouth of Buck Creek. One of these is on BLM land. The fifth camp is on BLM land along Burnt Ridge.  
  
One guard station also is reported. The Tioga Guard Station is not on BLM land, in the vicinity of the Buck Creek mouth.
- Cabins  
Three cabins are reported in this Subwatershed. The J.H. Flourney cabin dates from 1896. It is on BLM land, on the slope north of Tioga Creek in the Tioga area. The J.C. Pierce cabin also is near Tioga on the slope south of Tioga Creek, but is not on BLM land. The Skeeter Camp cabin (destroyed) was on the edge of the Subwatershed, on BLM land along Burnt Mountain ridge.
- Trails  
There are portions of four historic trails recorded within the Subwatershed. The Callahan Trail extends generally east-west, connecting the Tioga area with Callahan. The Skeeter Camp Horse Trail extends generally north-south, connecting the Sitkum area (on the East Fork Coquille River) with Tioga Creek (and the South Fork Coos River). This also is known as the "Coquille Trail". The "Old Coos Bay Trail" dates from 1898. It extends generally northwest-southeast, connecting the Tioga area with southern Coos Bay. The fourth trail is known as the "1917 Trail". It recorded portion extends generally north-south for several miles along the ridge west of the Williams River.

## Paleontological Resources

Fossiliferous outcrops also are classified as "prehistoric resources" by the BLM. There is one such outcrop identified on BLM land in this Subwatershed. Although its presence has been noted in our records, an evaluation of

the nature and extent of this paleontological resource has not been made.

### **Current and recent Past Human Activities**

Homesteading - Attempts to homestead in Tioga Creek occurred from 1899 to 1906. Only one attempt led to a homestead entry patent in 1904. That homestead later became a logging camp site and was in section 6, T.27S., R.9W., Will. Mer. Hog Ranch Creek got its name because about 1910, hogs were herded into that area to be fattened on the abundant myrtle nuts<sup>1</sup>.

Timber harvest - There are no records of timber patents in this subwatershed. Significant harvesting began in 1944 following construction of the Tioga Mainline Road and Tioga Dam by Irwin and Lyons. Since Irwin and Lyons had access to the Tioga Creek area, they were the primary bidders when the BLM first sold timber in that area (Beckham, 1990). Changes in timber harvest and road building over time are discussed elsewhere in this document.

Commercial and recreational transportation - The subwatershed was crossed by several trails that were in place when the land was first surveyed. Many of those same trails show on a 1936 map of the area (a framed copy of the 1936 map hangs in the Coos Bay District Office). Nearly all of the trails in the subwatershed were eventually replaced by roads. In 1936, one road passed through the subwatershed. That road went from McKinley, up Middle Creek, and east to Baughman Lookout<sup>2</sup>. Soon after, the Burnt Ridge CCC Road was built. It is now known simply as the Burnt Ridge Road.

Building on the Tioga Mainline started in 1943. It went down Tioga Creek from Winker Mast's homestead cabin to South Fork Coos River. Materials and equipment used to build the Tioga Dam were trucked in by way of Middle Creek Road and down the Tioga Mainline. The road also served a logging camp near the dam site (Beckham, 1990). Later, another road branched off of the road to Middle Creek going up Tioga Creek. That road reached section 8 T.27S., R.9W., Will. Mer. about 1954. By 1956, the following additional roads were built:

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- C 25-10-35.0
- C 26-10-23.3 Hatcher Ck Rd between the west rim to Tioga Ck.
- C 26-10-24.0
- C 26-10-24.1
- C The part of the 26-10-26.0 road inside section 26
- C 27-9-9.0
- C 27-9-15.0
- C 27-9-15.2 north leg of the Beyers Way loop
- C 27-9-26.0 Upper Dead Horse Road (part of a longer road between Burnt Ridge and the Coos Bay Wagon Road)
- C 27-11-12.0 road between what is now the junction with the East Fk. Brummet Ck Rd. and the 28-9-3.0 road (which also tied to the Coos Bay Wagon Road)
- C The Burnt Ridge Road was improved and in places rerouted.

Much of this road construction was either to access private land or to salvage trees on BLM land burned by the 1952 Williams River Fire. Before the road system was fully developed, the long travel time in and out of the subwatershed made guard stations, cabins and logging camps a practical necessity. Appraisals for early BLM timber sales in this subwatershed included allowances for camp kitchens and water transportation. The shift in

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<sup>1</sup> A children's book, Tioga's Pigs (Krewson 1955), was loosely based on the people and events associated with the hog ranch on Tioga Creek. Locals have said the events related in the story are embellished. However, the relative geographic placement of the sites mentioned in the story are accurate. Also the descriptions of the vegetation and the landscape appear consistent with what we know about the Tioga Creek area in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century based on other sources. The book is out of print but can be found in the Coos Bay Library, and can often be found in local second hand book stores.

<sup>2</sup> Most of the route of the original road can still be driven. It is Middle Ck Rd. (27-11-29.0) to Tioga Tie Road (26-10-36.0) to Tioga Main Line (25-11-28.0) to Burnt Ck Ridge Rd (26-9-31.0) to 26-9-8.0 to 26-9-22.0 to 26-9-14.1. Cross Williams River. At the junction of Cedar Ck and Williams River, follow 8010 road to 8500 road. Follow the 8500 road through the Callahan area and on to the Baughman Lookout site.

recreational hunting patterns from hunting out of elk camps to road hunting was probably encouraged by an expanding road system that readily accessed early seral (clearcut) land.

#### Human use in the Tioga Creek Subwatershed can be broken into 6 periods -

Before approximately 1830:

About 1830 is when the Native American tribes using the land in and around the subwatershed were first exposed to Euro-American diseases resulting in epidemics and precipitous population reduction. We have little information on how the Native Americans modified the environment before 1830. We can speculate that their influence on processes and forest condition was greatly reduced after disease caused their populations to crash.

1830 to 1897

This may be the period of least human influence in the subwatershed since the plant assemblage, known as the Douglas-fir forest, first arose 6,000 years ago.

1897 to 1943

This period started with the first land survey in the subwatershed and was the beginning of Euro-American influence on forest conditions and processes. During this time Euro-Americans practiced subsistence living in the subwatershed and first attempted to exclude fire. Several tries to homestead in the subwatershed were made during the first 10 years of this period of subsistence living. The extent of early fire control is unknown. However, spot checks of local newspapers from 1918 to 1922 found reports of fire crews responding to lightning fires in 1919 at the mouth of Tioga Creek, and reports of multiple fires “in the Tioga district” in 1922<sup>3</sup>.

1944 to 1974

This was a time of rapid road system expansion and subsequent logging. Environmental protection requirements were minimal by today’s standards. There was a broadly held belief that forests should be intensively managed which meant, among other things, that the “decadent” old growth should be rapidly converted to vigorous managed stands.

1975 to 1993

This is a transition period. State Forest Practices Act, TPC classification of BLM lands, spotted owl issues, and the 1983 MFP resulted in greater environmental protection, and application of stream buffers and wildlife set-asides.

1993 to present

The State Forest Practices Regulations were rewritten to require greater environmental protection. Ecosystem management was implemented on Federal lands.

The watershed analysis team used sources from 1897 to 1954 as a basis for the “reference condition.” The virtue of those sources is that they are our earliest information. They may not be a true representation of the pre-1830 forest conditions and landscape processes.

#### Improvements Other than Rec Site and Roads -

Active Quarries:

Elk wallow (Sect. 14, T.27S., R.9W.)

Inactive Quarries:

Sect. 17 & 31, T.26S., R.9W.

Sect. 35, T.26S., R.10W.

Sect. 10, T.27S., R.9W.

Rock Stock Pile Sites

Elk Wallow (Sect. 14, T.27S., R.9W.)

Sect. 9 & 17, T.27S., R.9W.

Concrete lined water holes:

Sect. 13 T.27S., R.10W.

Natural bottom water holes:

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<sup>3</sup> “Lighting starts fires in Tioga” Coos Bay Times July 28, 1919. “[Wind has fanned the flames so that they are again threatening to escape control.” Coos Bay Times August 9, 1919. The Junction of Williams River with Coos river is the main point of trouble.” Coos Bay Times August 15, 1919. “...several bad fires raging in the Tioga district.” Coos Bay Times Sept 14, 1922.

Sect. 13 T.27S., R.10W.

Sect. 10, 15(?) & 23, T.27S., R.9W.

Weather Station (RAWS):

Sect. 14 T.27S., R.10W.

## **REGIONAL HISTORIC CONTEXT**

Throughout southwest Oregon, the general trends in Euro-American development have followed a similar progression of exploration and settlement. These have produced several regional trends, all of which have found expression in the Tioga Creek Subwatershed. These include development of federal government control, and economic activities related to the fur trade, mining, lumbering, settlement, modern transportation, and subsistence living.

The fur trade drove the first wave of Euro-American explorations. Initial contacts with Native American residents were by sea, followed shortly by land-based parties. Both types of explorers traded with the Native American residents but did not develop permanent settlements.

The discovery of gold spurred the next wave of interest, and with mining came the first Euro-American settlements. Permanent settlement led to more severe conflicts with the Native American residents. In turn, these conflicts led to U.S. Government intervention and the removal of the native population to reservations. Lumbering started as support for the mining effort, but quickly grew into the most important economic activity in the region. The development of towns and cities was fueled by a seemingly inexhaustible supply of timber, and a ready market for it.

During the 20th century, creation of modern transportation links brought this heretofore isolated region into reliable contact with the rest of Oregon and the United States. Although businesses providing supplies and services developed in the region's towns, many people retained Native American/pioneer practice of "subsistence living"--obtaining daily needs directly from the land. Although for some this was a lifestyle choice, in trying economic times when money was scarce subsistence living practices often made survival possible.

The following is a more detailed, roughly chronological, discussion of these regional trends. Information from elsewhere on the Coos and on the Coquille river systems is presented to place Tioga Creek Subwatershed events within a broader context.

The Fur Trade - The earliest known American exploration in the vicinity was in 1791, when Captain James Baker sailed the *Jenny* over the bar at the Umpqua River mouth. Captain Charles Bishop sailed a sister ship, the *Ruby*, up the Umpqua River the next year. Another early American exploration of the vicinity took place in 1792, when Captain Robert Gray sailed the *Columbia* to the mouth of the Umpqua River to trade for furs. They were met by Native Americans (probably Lower Umpqua) who paddled to the ship and exchanged otter skins for copper and iron. Afterwards, the ship continued south (stopping again off Cape Blanco) without any of the crew actually having made landfall. It is clear that other explorers and traders plied the Umpqua River and perhaps also its tributaries during the last decade of the 18th century and into the 19th century, but the available documentation of these voyages remains sketchy.

Land-based Euro-American exploration was initiated by John McLoughlin, Chief Factor of the Hudson's Bay Company (HBC). Alexander R. McLeod led expeditions during 1826 from Fort Vancouver, the HBC base on the lower Columbia River.

U.S. Government Military Intervention - The first of several serious confrontations took place only one year after the McLeod expedition between the Native people and Euro-Americans. In June, 1828, Jedediah Smith and a contingent of men drove more than 300 pack animals laden with furs from the Klamath River in northern California on a trek north, following trails along the coast.

They camped near Bandon on July 2, at Whiskey Run beach on July 3, and near Cape Arago on July 4th. On July 8th, they had their first confrontation with the Coos Indians near Charleston. Harrison Rogers records in his journal that when they reached the Coos River mouth, they found the "Kakoosh" Indians very numerous.

*They commenced to trading shell and scale fish, raspberrys, strawberrys [sic] and two other kinds of berries that I am unacquainted with, also some fur skins. In the evening we found that they had been shooting arrows into 8 of our horses and mules; 3 mules and one horse died shortly after they were shot. The Indians all left camp but the 2 that acted as interpreters; they tell us that one Indian got mad on account of a trade he made and killed the mules and horse (Maloney 1940:317).*

The next day, Rogers wrote:

*A great many Indians live along this river bank; there [sic] houses built after the fashion of a shed... We talked to the chiefs about those Indians shooting our horses but we could not get but little satisfaction as they say they were not accessary to it and we, finding them so numerous and the traveling being bad, we thought it advisable to let it pass at present without notice. We bought a number of beaver, land and sea otter skins from them in the course of the day (Maloney 1940:318).*

It remains unclear what actions began the conflict, but it is known that three days later after making camp along the lower Umpqua River, fourteen of the eighteen man party were killed in a battle with the Kalawatset Indians (Peterson and Powers 1977). Smith and the other three survivors made their way back to Fort Vancouver.

Euro-American economic interest in the region built slowly throughout the 19th century. By 1834, HBC had established a second depot, possibly called "Vernon", near what later became Scottsburg (Schlesser 1973). In 1836, the HBC schooner *Cadborough* brought supplies and lumber from Portland, sailing first along the Columbia River to the Pacific Ocean, then down the coast and up the Umpqua River. From the head of tidewater at Vernon, the supplies were packed overland to Elkton and used to construct the fort. In 1847, Fort Umpqua development consisted of five permanent buildings, a stockade 90 feet square, and 80 acres of cultivated land. Until a fire destroyed it in 1851, this fort was the hub of numerous American and British exploration, trapping and settlement expeditions throughout southern Oregon.

The conflicts between natives and Euro-Americans simmered for several more decades as settlers continue to enter the area, before culminating in the Rogue Indian War of 1855-56. Although there was misunderstanding on both sides, activities of early explorers, trappers, and even miners often did not cause physical confrontations, as the Euro-Americans were seen as temporary users of the land. Once more permanent settlements were established and fencing associated with "private" property was introduced, Native American concerns increased dramatically. Prior to the final confrontations between U.S. Government forces and Native Americans in 1855-56, there were several "battles" involving local settler's organizations and Native Americans along the coast. Non-combatants on both sides were being murdered, which led to sending U.S. Army troops into southwest Oregon to restore peace. The Army settled land conflicts by relocating the Native people out of the area, to reservations created north of their homelands along the central Oregon coast.

Since negotiation for their unratified treaty in 1855, the Lower Umpqua have shared a common history with the Coos and Siuslaw. They acted as a single unit in negotiations with the federal government, and retain this relationship today (as the Confederated Tribes of Coos, Lower Umpqua & Siuslaw Indians).

A second "Fort Umpqua" was established along the lower river in July 1856, to keep the Indians from returning from the reservation to their traditional territory as well as to protect the Indians from settlers who desired to exterminate them. This fort was abandoned in July 1862, because of economic and manpower pressures created during the Civil War.

U.S. Government Land Policy - In 1866, Congress passed the Oregon and California Railroad Grant, which shifted payment for public transportation-related improvement projects from federal to private funding. In the West, railroad companies were granted land as subsidies to defray the costs of rail line construction. In 1869, Congress granted to the Oregon and California Railroad (O & C) twenty odd-numbered sections for every mile of track it constructed; these could be chosen from up to 30 miles away on either side of its right-of-way (Beckham 1986). However, Congress also added the provision that "The lands granted...shall be sold to actual settlers only, in quantities not greater than one quarter section to one purchaser, and for a price not exceeding two dollars and fifty cents per acre." Most chosen land was mountainous, both because much of the prime bottomland already had been settled and

forest resources were desirable to the O & C.

By the turn of the century it had become clear that the O & C systematically violated Congress' size and price provisions by selling larger quantities of land to lumber companies and speculators. In 1916 Congress passed the Chamberlain-Ferris Act, which "revested" (returned) to the federal government the unsold O & C grant lands. The vast majority of BLM land in the Tioga Creek Subwatershed is composed of these revested O & C grant lands, and this has implications for the presence of cultural resources.

Mining - After the fur trade, the next wave of Euro-American settlement in the region was the result of gold being discovered along Whiskey Run beach in February 1853. The camp which sprang up here was called Whiskey Run, reportedly after a stranger appeared with half a barrel of whiskey. It soon developed into a town, which was called Randolph by its more sober citizens. It was short-lived. A storm in the spring of 1854 covered most of the gold-bearing black sands, and when new gold discoveries were made on a Coquille River tributary, the Sixes River, and along southern beaches, the town largely was abandoned.

By 1855, two log houses were constructed along the north bank of the lower Coquille River by the proprietors of a regular ferry, transporting both 'man and beast' across the river along the route south from Bandon. The first Euro-American settlement inland was near the confluence with the South Fork Coquille River, where the town of Myrtle Point now stands. This was the site of an Indian village, but Ephraim Catching filed a donation land claim in 1853 and Henry Myers surveyed and platted the townsite (named Myersville) in 1861. In 1866, Chris Lehnerr became the townsite owner and built a grist mill. The town name was changed from "Ott" to Myrtle Point in 1876.

Although settlers were living all along the bank where the town of Coquille now stands by the mid-1850s, it wasn't until 1872 that the townsite was platted by Tite Willard. It was incorporated in 1885, and grew steadily, becoming the county seat in 1897.

Coal mining was important in the Coos Bay area since the earliest white settlers began building camps and towns. In the 1890s, several mines were opened near Riverton, a few miles below Coquille. Only the Timon mine was a success, and Riverton became a port for steamships carrying coal to San Francisco. Riverton suffered the same fate as many other towns dependent on played-out mining towns when demand for coal was reduced.

Settlement - The first Euro-American to live in the Coos Bay area were involuntary settlers, mainly soldiers bound for Fort Orford on the *Captain Lincoln*. After it beached on the North Spit of Coos Bay in January, 1852, the castaways spent four months enduring the lashing winds and rains of the Oregon coast in their temporary shelters of sail cloth (Beckham 1973:1-6).

As the lure of gold drew miners to Whiskey Run and the Coquille River, during the summer of 1853 an announcement of newly "discovered" territory was printed in west coast newspapers:

*A Mr. Sherman...reports the discovery of a new and important bay about ten miles north of the mouth of the Coquille River. It is called Coos Bay....with about forty others [he] made the trip from Grave Creek...most of the party remained for the purpose of making improvements and permanent settlement. A heavy deposit of coal...was discovered a short distance from the bay (Anonymous 1853).*

Sherman and his colleagues formed the Coos Bay Commercial Company, and laid out a townsite which they called Empire City. In 1855 Henry Heaton Luce established a saw mill and shipyard on the bay, which gave stability to the town. Gradually, other settlements sprung up around the bay which have consolidated into the modern Bay Area.

By the 1860s several settlers had moved into the North and South forks of the Coos River. Here they found rich bottomland soil in an area which was isolated yet relatively close to market on the bay.

Modern Transportation - One of the first things the earliest settlers of towns around Coos Bay needed to do is create a road system so that supplies could be packed to the miners at Randolph. The first official road was authorized by the new county court on July 3, 1854 to connect Empire City and Randolph.

During 1857 a nine-mile long route was surveyed from Rowland Prairie on the South Fork Coquille River to intersect the Coos Bay to Camas Valley trail at the junction of the South and Middle Forks of the Coquille River.

The development of the shipbuilding industry was allied with lumbering. Most early sawmills had associated shipyards, and the mills cut the timbers and lumber for ship construction. The first ship built in the area was the *Mary*, built in 1853-54 and launched near the mouth of the Coquille River. From 1869 to 1888, eleven ocean-going ships were built at shipyards along the Coquille River.

River traffic continued to be the most important link between the south coast and the interior of Oregon the development of the railroad around World War I times. It wasn't until the 1920s that the Roosevelt Highway began to provide modern road access throughout southwestern Oregon.

Railroad development into the region also occurred relatively late, largely because of the difficulty and expense of construction. About 1885, the Southern Pacific Company, successor to the O & C, surveyed a route along the Umpqua River through the coast range but did not act to build the line. In 1889, local investors formed the Umpqua River Railroad & Improvement Company, but could not raise construction capital (Abdill 1966). In 1905, the Oregon Western Railway conducted a new survey of the route and in 1907 began its construction. During economic downturns in 1911, work ceased after building several miles of graded roadbed, two large tunnels and several bridge abutments. In 1916, the Southern Pacific Company again took the lead and finally completed a route between the Willamette Valley and the coast. However, this route bypassed the Umpqua River, instead following the Siuslaw River.

Lumbering - The lumber industry began in conjunction with the early mining. At Randolph, the first commercial mill was set up to provide lumber for the sluice-boxes used in gold mining. John Hamblock and Edward Fahy built a sawmill on the Coquille River during 1857-58, which was run for many years. Several mills were located along the Coquille, including: the Hoover sawmill (1875) near Norway; the Coquille Mill & Tug Company, at Parkersburg; and the oldest on the river, the Myrtle Grove sawmill. The later was water-powered, and manufactured cedar for the San Francisco market. The company had its own 58-ton schooner, which then would return laden with merchandise. As the nearest timber stands were utilized, fresh cutting had to go deeper into the forests. Several logging railroads were constructed to bring virgin timber from the mountains to the sawmills, including one from Myrtle Point to Powers (20 miles), along the South Fork Coquille River. Although now virtually a ghost town, Powers once had 1,800 residents at the height of the logging activities.

By the 1880s the demand for timber brought logging into the Coos River Valley. The early loggers worked mainly in the summer, using oxen to haul logs to the stream beds, where the winter freshets would wash the timber to the bay.

As logging probed deeper into the forests it became less practical for workers to commute daily, so logging camps were set up near current operations to house and feed them. The crews lived in bunkhouses, and were provided substantial meals prepared by a kitchen staff.

Euro-American settlement remained almost entirely below the Tioga Creek Subwatershed for many decades, until in the 1940s the Lawhorn property became the location for one of the Irwin and Lyons Lumber Company logging camps (Beckham and Minor 1980). During its "heyday", as many as one hundred men lived in these camps during the work week.

Subsistence Living - Subsistence living is the exploitation of natural resources for sustenance and/or profit. It formed an important way of life in southwestern Oregon during the latter stages of the 19th century and first three decades of the 20th century (Beckham and Minor 1980). Some people used subsistence activities as a supplement to a wage-paying job in order to obtain more income and "make ends meet." Others preferred hunting/fishing/gathering to "town living" as a way of life. Many people practicing this lifestyle squatted on public domain lands or took land claims under the Homestead Act of 1862. Many resources and techniques utilized in subsistence living closely mirrored those formerly used by the Native American residents, and many of those who practiced subsistence living had some Native American heritage. Vestiges of this life style continue to this day in the form of salvage loggers and brush pickers.

Hunting and fishing were important subsistence activities. Early fishing largely was for home-consumption until the mid-1870s, when the first pickled and smoked salmon left the Coquille River for San Francisco. Jens Jensen had a fishery a short distance above Parkersburg on the Coquille, where salmon were caught and processed. In 1883, the Coquille Packing Company established a modern salmon cannery near Parkersburg which was modeled after Columbia River canneries. It was an immediate success, largely due to the enormous salmon run. During the first year, 100 men were employed, with 120,000 fish taken. It burned down after a few years but was rebuilt. Two other canneries soon were established nearby, and canneries on the Coquille River operated until the early 20th century. The fishing grounds ran from the river mouth to Myrtle Point, some 45 river miles upstream. By 1897 the pressure on the fish runs had necessitated development of a state-owned fish hatchery. It was opened on the South Fork Coos River at the head of tidewater, where it operated until 1964.

Farming/ranching began simultaneously with the discovery of gold near the mouth of the Coquille River in about 1853. Initially, the main activity was stock raising. Cattle herds were established to provide meat to the mining population, and since grazing land was unrestricted it proved possible to turn a tidy profit.

Cows also allowed development of an extensive dairy industry, centered along the lower Coos River valley. During the 1870s and 1880s the Rogers family and Bessey brothers were making cheese. In 1892, farmers along the Coos River built a creamery at the river mouth. In 1919 the Coos Bay Mutual Creamery was established. It continued to process milk until the 1960s.

Ephraim Catching had cleared "an acre or two", planting corn and other garden produce by 1856 on his place at Myrtle Point. For the early settlers, farming was not only a way to provide produce for their families, but also was a good source of income by trading with the nearby gold mining and sawmill towns.

As well as planting large vegetable gardens and fruit trees, many subsistence farmers also gathered vegetal resources, including the numerous berry types growing in the area. In 1885 Charles and Thomas McFarlin began planting cranberries adjacent to the sand dunes near Coos Bay. Throughout the 1890s Charles developed new species of cranberries which laid the foundation for today's industry. Several large apple orchards were planted around Coos Bay, and Anton Wirth's Coos River Beauty Apple (developed in 1888) long was popular (Beckham 1973).

### **Summary**

The general context for the human uses that regulate ecosystem function or condition in this Subwatershed has been presented above. In summary, humans have interacted with the rest of the ecosystem for at least several thousand years, which always has produced alterations to it. Human activities varied over time, producing different "reference conditions", depending on the period of time examined. Our knowledge of past activities is limited, especially in periods prior to Euro-American settlement. It certainly appears that prehistoric human uses were relatively stable for long periods of time, and the greatest changes in human use have occurred during the last 140 years.

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