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Yomba Shoshone Tribe Environmental Newsletter

Focus on Climate Change



**You Must
Always Be
Careful With
Something
That Is
Greater Than
You**

Climate Change Effects All of Us



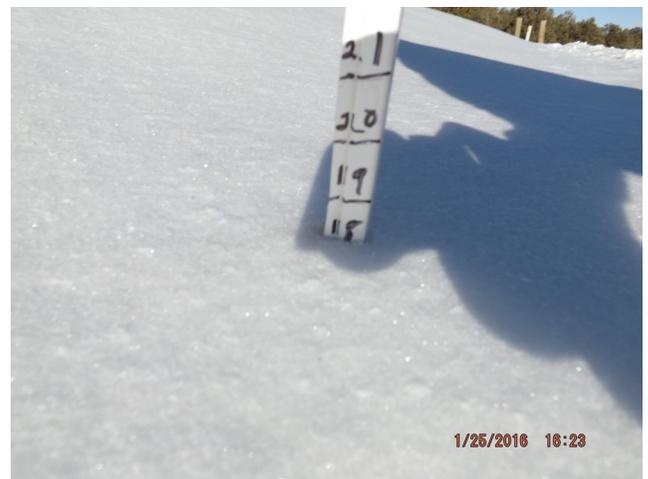
While Climate Change has an effect on all resources, the most serious threat is to the water. If there is no water, there is no life. Drought due to climate change mixed with intense periods of precipitation where the ground is so dry it can't soak it up fast enough, cause flash floods, mud slides, erosion and sedimentation in the river. Intense periods of dryness cause our rivers and streams to evaporate and may lead to wildfire, loss of habitat, destruction of crops and excessive wind.



The YST OEP is trying to alleviate its drought and flash flood problems by researching best water resource management practices. Water resource management is the activity of planning, developing, distributing and managing the optimum use of water resources. In addition to educating the community about water conservation, planting more drought resist ground cover and trees to control erosion is a high priority in combating some of the worse effects of climate change.

What is Climate Change?

A change in global or regional climate patterns, attributed largely to the increased levels of atmospheric carbon dioxide produced by the use of fossil fuels. We are noticing significant effects of climate change on the Yomba Shoshone Reservation due to moderate to severe rising temperatures. This not only initiates drought, but causes unpredictable weather patterns and more intense storms.



The YST Office of Environmental Protection and the people of the Yomba Shoshone Tribe have begun to research and plan different ways to mitigate the effects of climate change. With support from ITCN and the EPA, we are working with a consultant to define threats to the people, animals, vegetation and economy of the Reservation and surrounding communities.



BIA Noxious Weed Funding

This is the second year in a row that the YST Office of Environmental Protection was awarded BIA funding to combat noxious weeds on the Reservation. Last summer, maps were created showing which weeds occurred and where they were located. This year we are focusing on removing weeds around houses and Tribal buildings both to prevent fire, control erosion and stop the spread of the unwanted plants.



In addition, a strenuous effort is being made to remove and stop the spread of Tamarisk, also known as Salt Cedar, on the north end of Tribal lands.

Tamarisk is a very aggressive plant that can grow to be 25 feet tall and is difficult to control. It contains a large amount of

salt which spreads to the ground making the land unusable for growing crops or other plants. Often, other noxious weeds take root in the poor soil and degrade the land even more. In most cases, it takes three years of removing the plants before the infestation is under control. After that it may take another 10 years to heal the soil enough to make it productive again.

As climate change happens, noxious weeds occur more often because they thrive in unstable conditions. A number of noxious weeds found on the reservation contain neuro-toxins which can kill cattle and horses if consumed, Wild Iris is an example of one that is prevalent in Yomba. Weeds like Rabbit Brush, High White Top, Thistles and Hoary Cress are also being removed but it's a big project that may go on for years.



Yomba Pine Nut Gathering

On a beautiful weekend in September, over 90 people joined in gathering Pine Nuts. Participants engaged in blessing ceremonies, shared traditional foods, swapped stories, demonstrated time-honored skills and shared traditional ecological knowledge with the youth. Everyone is looking forward to an even bigger gathering next year!





The Pine Nut Gathering was hosted by the Yomba Office of Environmental Protection, the ASAP program with support from the Yomba Diabetes and Housing programs. We would to thank all the staff, volunteers and visitors who made this such a great event!

Climate Change and Wild Fires

As climate change affects weather patterns throughout the region, forest fires become inevitable. Not only does climate change cause severe drought and unpredictable flash floods from rain, but the hot dry air is perfect for fire conditions caused by lightning, dry plants, and even the litter of a burning cigarette. Fire, in particular, is a threat to our National Forests, as well as natural resources; especially our Pine Nut Trees because they are a source of food and also shelter for our sacred Eagle and other game animals like deer, antelope and sage grouse.

Some native species of plants require periodic fire disturbance in order to reproduce.

However, when fires become too big and too hot, those plants are destroyed along with everything else in the fires path. Consequently, small frequent fires are good as long as they can be contained. Whereas large fires that are unpredictable cause more harm than good.

Some ways of preventing fires is making sure to completely put out cigarettes before disposal, maintain waste, have adequate water supply and extinguishers in case of fire and know areas at most risk of a fire. If you see a wildfire contact your local authorities and stay away unless trained in fire safety.



What OEP is doing about Emergency Response

With So many disasters happening, the Yomba Shoshone Tribe has established an Emergency Response Team in order to delegate and manage an emergency, such as a flash flood, fire, poisoning or any other type of accident.

The YST Office of Environmental Protection is actively working on agreements with the Forest Service and BLM for assistance fighting fires that occur near Yomba. We are also establishing escape routes and developing the plans for the quickest ways to evacuate while determining head counts of each household and how to conform to each ones specific needs.

2016 Summer Youth Employment Project



The Summer Employment Project offers Yomba youth experience in a work environment while teaching them job skills, time management, team building, interviewing techniques and other skills. The past four years, the SYEP workers have been responsible for planting and maintaining the community garden and hoop house.

This summer, the youth also planted trees and bushes around the tribal complex and at homes throughout the Reservation. The youth learned how and where to plant trees for erosion control to counter act the effects of climate change.



They planted mostly deciduous trees, ones

that drop their leaves, as they offer shade in the

summer to keep things cooler but let sun through in the winter.

The SYEP workers were proud to see the transformation of the community through their hard work and are looking forward to watching the trees grow for many years to come.



Recycling Update

The Yomba Office of Environmental Protection continues to collect, sort and transport recycling from the Reservation in an effort to keep plastic bottles and aluminum cans out of the solid waste stream. Recycling bins throughout the tribal complex are emptied on a regular basis, picked up at members homes and all YST departments actively encourage recycling during their events.





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