

Tabletop Exercise After Action Report

The Yurok Tribe
Office of Emergency Services



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Part of Global Options Group, Inc.



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Introduction and Project Background

As the largest Indian Tribe in the State of California and one that has been affected by a significant number of major emergencies and natural disasters, the Yurok Tribe has begun to take the initiative to create an efficient and effective emergency response organization within the Tribe, as well as work to strengthen overall emergency preparedness among Northern California Pacific Coast Tribal Nations and other emergency response organizations within both the Del Norte and Humboldt County Operational Areas. As part of this effort, the Yurok Tribe applied and received a Citizen Preparedness and Participation Grant from the CaliforniaVolunteers, Office of the Governor.

The purpose of the grant was to strengthen mutual aid coordination among volunteer/voluntary organizations and local government responders in their ability to respond to an emergency on the Yurok Reservation. The objectives of the grant were as follows:

- Identify the strengths and weaknesses of existing partner agencies in their ability to effectively coordinate the delivery of emergency services to the citizens of the Yurok Reservation, including the communities of Weitchpec, Pecwan, and Klamath which include vulnerable populations, such as school-age children, low-income households and elders.
- Conduct a reservation-wide Operational Area meeting between mutual aid partners (within both the Del Norte and Humboldt County Operational Areas).
- Conduct a real-time emergency exercise involving the various mutual aid partners.
- To provide a template for other Tribal Nations in the State of California to strengthen mutual aid coordination among volunteer/voluntary organizations and local government responders in support of Tribal emergency operations.

The decision of the California Governor's Office of Homeland Security and CaliforniaVolunteers to support the Yurok Tribe in accomplishing these objectives is very significant. Never before has such an effort been initiated by a Tribal Nation within the State of California and equally supported by Federal, State and local entities. Consequently, the entire process of planning, developing, designing and facilitating the Reservation-wide Operational Area meeting and tabletop exercise has been carefully documented and will be provided as a guide and template to all Tribal Nations in the State of California. Both the Yurok Tribe and its consultant James Lee Witt Associates (JLWA) have worked to ensure that this document and supporting materials will not only be useful to the Yurok Tribe and its emergency management staff, but can also be utilized to encourage and/or strengthen the emergency preparedness efforts of all Tribal Nations.

The historical, geographic, economic and cultural diversity of Tribal lands presents each Tribal Nation and the communities it services and/or resides in with a broad, unique and varied set of challenges and vulnerabilities with respect to the threats posed by all-hazard incidents occurring on Tribal lands. And although the history of the relationship between federally-recognized

Tribal Nations as sovereign entities and the Federal and State government has been tenuous, there is hope that the combined motivation and effort to prepare for, respond to, and recover from emergencies and catastrophic disasters will be part of the resolution as well as help to save lives, property, cultural and environmental resources.

The Yurok Tribe

The mission of the Yurok Tribe is to exercise the aboriginal and sovereign rights of the Yurok People to continue forever the Tribal traditions of self-governance, cultural and spiritual preservation, stewardship of Yurok lands, waters, and other natural endowments, balanced social and economic development, peace and reciprocity, and respect for the dignity and individual rights of all persons living within the jurisdiction of the Yurok Tribe, while honoring their Creator, ancestors and descendants.

The Yurok Reservation

The Yurok Indian Reservation (YIR) is located in Northern California in the counties of Humboldt and Del Norte. Forests, mountainous terrain, the Klamath River and Pacific coastline characterize the region. Much of the coastline and adjacent forests are set aside as state and national parks and forestlands, including Redwood National Park. As a result, communities are limited to scattered towns and villages along U.S. Highway 101, State Highway 169 and State Highway 96, and other rural tribal and county roads. A private timber company, Green Diamond Resources Company, owns a vast majority of the land in the Lower Klamath Basin on the YIR and access roads are generally off limits for public use impeding emergency transportation routes.

The Reservation consists of 63,035 acres of land located from the center line of the Klamath River and the banks of the river from the mouth of the Klamath at the Pacific Ocean to one air mile above the confluence of the Klamath and Trinity Rivers. The Klamath River is the second largest California river, second only to the Sacramento River in size. The segment of the Klamath River running through the Reservation is approximately 47 miles long, or about 16% of the total length of the Klamath River measured from the outlet of the Upper Klamath Lake in Oregon to the Pacific Ocean.

The Klamath River defines the very shape of the Reservation and includes two disperse, separate populated areas on the Reservation generally known as the up-river and down-river. The total population on the Reservation is approximately 2,100. The up-river area is located in Humboldt County and includes several small communities or villages, known as Weitchpec, Bald Hills, Tulley Creek, McKinnon Hill, Notchco, Ke'pel, Pecwan, and Wautec. The down-river portion is primarily located in Del Norte County and includes Klamath Glen, Klamath, Blake Allotment, Hunter Creek (not on Reservation), Hoppel, Requa, Resighini Rancheria (separate federally recognized Tribe and jurisdiction) and Klamath Beach Road.

Resighini Rancheria is located in Klamath on the southern side of the Klamath River within the boundaries of the Yurok Indian Reservation. The Hoopa Reservation borders the Yurok Indian Reservation on the southeastern boundary of the reservation near Weitchpec.

Resighini Rancheria and the Hoopa Tribe are Federally-recognized Indian Tribes and are both separate and distinct Tribal governments from the Yurok Tribe. All three tribes manage their own emergency operations.

Additional Background

The Yurok are California's largest Indian Tribe with over 5,000 enrolled members. However, without a tax base, gaming or other significant business revenues, the Yurok Tribe does not have the resources to construct essential community facilities, to install or replace eroding infrastructure or to create sustainable economic development on the Reservation. The Tribe has an 80 percent poverty rate and 70 percent of the up-river inhabitants do not have telephone service or electricity.

Historically, problems have included lack of land for economic development and community facilities, inadequate telecommunications and electrical infrastructure, and a grossly substandard transportation system. Much of this has limited the chance for economic growth, access to health care and educational opportunities, reduced any potential for agricultural production, and limited job opportunities.

Currently, with a newly organized government, the Yurok Tribe now employs 200 individuals in more than twelve departments including Environmental Protection, Social Services, Forestry, Fisheries and Education.

The Tribe is hopeful about increasing their capacity for self-governance and cultural preservation. On November 24, 1993, the Constitution of the Yurok Tribe was certified and approved, after having passed a Ratification Election by a majority of the Yurok Tribal members. The Constitution defines the territory, jurisdiction and authority of its Tribal Government.

The Yurok Tribe's main offices are located in Klamath, California. Enrolled and registered tribal members elect nine of its members to the Tribal Council. The Tribal Chairperson and Vice Chairperson are elected at-large. Seven Council members represent the seven Tribal Districts. Each Council member services a term of three years. The Council meets at least monthly. Individual Council members have District meetings at least quarterly. All regular and special meetings of the Council are open to members of the Yurok Tribe.

Tribal Council

The Yurok Tribal Council is the central governing authority of the Yurok Tribe. It is important to note that this project would not have been possible without their dedication and support to emergency preparedness. It is this commitment that will enable the Yurok Tribe Office of Emergency Services to continue their efforts on behalf of all Tribal members.



Maria Tripp
Chairperson



Bonnie Green
Vice-Chairperson



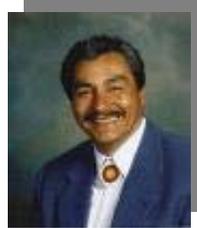
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Executive Summary

On December 7, 2007, the Yurok Tribe hosted a tabletop exercise facilitated by James Lee Witt Associates (JLWA). The exercise was used to direct participants toward operational and policy decisions which may guide future prevention, response, and recovery planning efforts for emergencies on behalf of Tribal Nations.

The exercise accomplished its main goals and objectives by determining what is needed to maximize coordination, mobilization, and integration of Federal, State and local mutual aid resources in support of Tribal emergency operations in response to emergencies and catastrophic disasters. It was an important step in helping to clarify inter- and intra-governmental communication and coordination as well as review Unified Command and Multi-Agency Coordination concepts for the development of operational guidelines, mutual aid agreements, and templates. The exercise also enhanced communications and coordination between the Yurok Tribe and both Humboldt and Del Norte County Operational Areas in an effort to achieve a more effective and efficient emergency response and recovery.

Major Strengths

The major strengths identified during this exercise are as follows:

- The Yurok Tribe has begun to take the necessary steps to prepare for the challenges that it will confront in a major emergency situation, especially with the limited resources and personnel that may or may not be available. This exercise provided the opportunity for the Yurok Tribe and the local community to strengthen the level of awareness and capabilities of its emergency management system.
- Participants willingly engaged in a stimulated discussion in which they demonstrated their knowledge of their current emergency management capabilities while formulating the necessary decisions to respond to an emergency situation. The Yurok Tribe Emergency Management staff are increasingly aware of the need to anticipate future emergency response needs while also executing immediate and critical operational and policy decisions during an emergency situation.
- It is very evident that there has been thoughtful consideration to the necessity for the Yurok Tribe and all Tribal Nations to prepare for and manage crisis situations. Significant efforts are being made to develop emergency plans and procedures, increase communication and coordination with the Operational Areas, and establish mutual aid relationships.

Primary Areas for Improvement

Throughout the exercise, several opportunities for improvement in the Yurok Tribe's ability to respond to a catastrophic disaster were identified. The primary areas for improvement, including recommendations, are as follows:

- Decision-making and actions must be oriented so that the disaster events do not get out in front of the response organization. This is accomplished through robust assessments of regional situational awareness and thoughtful and strategic objectives published in an Incident Action Plan (IAP).
- The Yurok Tribe should work to strengthen communication and coordination with Humboldt and Del Norte Counties through continued participation in Operational Area meetings, combined planning efforts, and joint training opportunities. This will ensure that resource requests and additional information reporting is accurate and communicated through the appropriate channels in order to maintain trust and increase accountability.
- More cohesion should be displayed between operations in the Yurok Tribe Emergency Operations Center (EOC) and the operations taking place in the Humboldt and Del Norte County Emergency Operations Centers. Constant coordination, communication and cooperation should be taking place between the Yurok Tribe and the Operational Areas before, during and after a disaster event that affects the Tribe. This will strengthen key partnerships and situational awareness, as well as increase the accountability of resources that are available and assigned.
- There is a need to specifically identify the essential services provided by the Yurok Tribe and ensure that those services can be provided, especially to vulnerable populations, in the event of a substantial loss of personnel and/or resources. The Yurok Tribe should work to formalize mutual aid agreements and build strategic partnerships.
- The Yurok Tribe needs to consider the execution of pre-event contracts for commodities, services and support due to their significant role in shortening the time it will take for the Tribe to restore services after a disaster. These contracts may also ensure that the Yurok Tribe will receive critical resources when there is a heightened demand for certain commodities and/or services in the event of a regional, statewide, or Federal emergency.
- The Yurok Tribe is still in the early stages of developing a Standardized Emergency Management System (SEMS) / National Incident Management System (NIMS) compliant emergency organizational structure. It is important that the Yurok Tribe continue to learn and adapt to these existing emergency response systems in order to strengthen the communication and coordination with all Federal, State and local partnering agencies during an emergency or catastrophic event.
- Although Federal and State emergency management systems are in place, there are still noticeable operational and policy gaps that remain in ensuring coordination and cooperation between the Yurok Tribe and Federal, State and local entities in mitigating against, preparing for, responding to, and recovering from an emergency or catastrophic disaster. This is partly due to the lack of formalized processes, specific legal authorities and in many cases an observed lack of understanding on the part of mainstream government as to the special and unique needs of Tribal Nations and vice versa. As a

This report provides a summary of the exercise with analysis and conclusions of the value and effectiveness of the outcomes for the continued development of the Yurok Tribe Emergency Operations Plan.

Acknowledgements

Over the course of several months, the Exercise Design Team developed the scenario, objective and goals of the exercise in coordination with the Yurok Tribe and first responders in the local community. In addition, the assessment and recommendations contained in this report were developed through the advice and support of the following people:

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Section I: Exercise Overview

A detailed exercise scenario is provided in Appendix A.

The tabletop exercise discussion was designed into three (3) situational periods to initiate a progressive discussion from the beginning of an event into disaster recovery. The scenario presented the participants with a significant number of challenges as a consequence of the flooding of the Klamath River. A total of fifty (50) participants and observers attended the exercise with significant representation from staff that has the primary responsibility in developing and leading the Yurok Tribe's response to an emergency situation.

Participating Organizations

- Yurok Tribe
- Governor's Office of Emergency Services
- Governor's Office of Homeland Security
- CalFire
- U.S. Department of Agriculture
- Del Norte Chapter of the American Red Cross
- Humboldt Chapter of the American Red Cross
- Redwood National and State Parks
- National Park Service
- Humboldt County Sheriff's Office
- Del Norte County Administration
- California Highway Patrol
- Del Norte County Health and Human Services
- Karuk Tribe of California
- Hoopa Valley Indian Tribe
- Trinidad Rancheria
- Smith River Rancheria
- United Indian Health Services, Inc.
- Klamath River Volunteer Fire Department
- National Weather Service
- United States Coast Guard
- Humboldt County Office of Emergency Services
- Del Norte Ambulance
- California Volunteers – Office of the Governor
- Del Norte County Sheriff's Department
- Del Norte County Office of Emergency Services
- Orick Volunteer Fire Department

Yurok Tribe Consultant James Lee Witt Associates (JLWA) served as the facilitator of the exercise. The facilitator added additional information as needed and answered questions to help guide participants to discuss potential information gaps and areas for improvement.

JLWA presented scripted briefs for discussion to exercise participants that described scenarios and the current status of the emergency/disaster operation from the onset of the emergency. JLWA continued to inject updated information and problems encountered as the exercise continued. Participants responded to situations as presented through discussion, based on experience and knowledge, as well as the Yurok Tribe Emergency Operations Plan.

The elements of the scenario were shared only with the exercise design team, and exercise control staff. Exercise controllers had access to the entire scenario and, within limits, could answer questions pertaining to the scenario.

In addition, the following assumptions were incorporated in order to facilitate exercise play:

- There are no “hidden agendas” nor are there any trick questions.
- All participants will receive information at the same time.
- This is not a test, but an introduction and operational/policy decision-making and educational discussion.
- Participants should assume that other Federal, Tribal, State and local agencies will be implementing their emergency plans, procedures, and protocols.
- The scenario is used strictly as a means to facilitate discussion. The exercise is created to stimulate an emergency situation as accurately as possible. Any existing factual errors in the case should not be debated among the participants, but rather presented to the facilitators after the exercise is completed.

A hotwash immediately followed the tabletop exercise, and allowed participants and observers to identify additional gaps and vulnerabilities, and lessons learned within the facilitated discussion. A more formal evaluation process followed as participants and observers were asked to complete an evaluation form provided by James Lee Witt Associates.

Section 2: Exercise Design Summary

The purpose of the exercise was to coordinate the activities and clarify the decision-making responsibilities of the Yurok Tribe in response to a catastrophic incident. The exercise goals reflect the overall focus of the exercise design. The exercise objectives reflect specific activities that support the achievement of these goals.

Exercise Goals

- To clarify actions and enhance coordination and communication within the Yurok Tribe with respect to the Yurok Tribe Emergency Operations Plan, and in accordance and coordination with Del Norte and Humboldt Operational Area procedures, and associated informational issues required to make educated, informed response decisions in the event of an emergency or disaster that may impact and affect the Yurok Indian Reservation.
- To identify issues of “high priority” relating to the management of an emergency or disaster and related events that may guide and/or direct further development of protocols/procedures, training and policy development, and recommendations efforts of the Yurok Tribe.

Exercise Objectives

- To clarify jurisdictional interaction, command and control issues, coordination and support, and responsibilities of the Yurok Tribe.
- To clarify public information needs and crisis/risk communications strategies/priorities of the Yurok Tribe and in coordination with Federal, Tribal, Regional, State and local levels.
- To clarify how the Yurok Tribe transitions into an Emergency Organization as outlined in the Yurok Tribe Emergency Operations Plan in accordance and coordination with Del Norte and Humboldt Operational Area procedures, the Standardized Emergency Management System (SEMS) and the National Incident Management System (NIMS).
- To identify the roles and existing partner agencies in their ability to communicate and effectively coordinate the delivery of emergency services to the citizens of the Yurok Reservation, including the communities of Weitchpec, Pecwan, and Klamath which include vulnerable populations, such as school-age children, low-income households and elders.

Section 3: Analysis of Capabilities

Analysis of Exercise Objectives

An analysis of exercise objectives allows James Lee Witt Associates to determine how well the Yurok Tribe and other participants addressed the pre-defined objectives during the tabletop exercise.

Objective: To clarify jurisdictional interaction, command and control issues, coordination and support, and responsibilities of the Yurok Tribe.

Analysis: The exercise highlighted the need for more enhanced coordination and understanding of operations between the Yurok Tribe and both the Humboldt and Del Norte County Operational Areas during day-to-day operations to strengthen the ability to communicate and coordinate in the event of an emergency. Additional joint training opportunities are necessary for the Yurok Tribe and Operational Area(s) to better understand each other's needs and expectations during an emergency situation, and to help establish key relationships. It will also allow for a greater understanding of how the emergency functions of the Tribe and the Operational Area(s) will complement each other, as well as the mechanism through which communication will be coordinated and controlled through the Regional Emergency Operations Center (REOC) and the State Operations Center (SOC).

Objective: To clarify public information needs and crisis/risk communications strategies/priorities of the Yurok Tribe and in coordination with local, regional, state, tribal and federal levels.

Analysis: As demonstrated through the exercise, the Yurok Tribe is very aware of the need to distribute accurate and verifiable information to Tribal members and key stakeholders as soon as possible. The Yurok Tribe should work to develop comprehensive procedures on how information will be coordinated and disseminated in an event of an emergency, and to ensure that emergency management staff are continually trained in the process by which information should be crafted, coordinated, and disseminated.

Objective: To clarify how the Yurok Tribe transitions into an emergency organization as outlined in the Yurok Tribe Emergency Operations Plan in accordance and coordination with Del Norte and Humboldt Operational Area procedures, the Standardized Emergency Management System (SEMS) and the National Incident Management System (NIMS).

Analysis: The Yurok Tribe should continue to work to develop and execute training for Tribal members that include the procedures for activation of emergency operations, what the activation means, the subsequent events that will take place, the functions of the operations center, and the responsibilities of the different players in the event of an emergency. It is also important for the Operational Area(s) to fully engage with and assist the Yurok Tribe in navigating through the emergency management process and

provide assistance in ensuring compliance to the Standardized Emergency Management System and the National Incident Management System.

Objective: To identify the roles of existing partner agencies in their ability to communicate and effectively coordinate the delivery of emergency services to the citizens of the Yurok Reservation, including the communities of Weitchpec, Pecwan, and Klamath which include vulnerable populations, such as school-age children, low-income households and elders.

Analysis: This exercise was significant in helping to clarify the roles and responsibilities of the Yurok Tribe's partner agencies as well as to identify the challenges that exist in ensuring the efficient and effective delivery of emergency services to the citizens of the Yurok Reservation. The Yurok Tribe should continue to strengthen Operational Area relationships and facilitate mutual aid partnerships through participation in training opportunities and exercises. This will allow for the further development and enhancement of response capabilities, procedures and policies of the Yurok Tribe as well as the Humboldt and Del Norte County Operational Areas.

Analysis of Critical Task Performance

Findings and Recommendations

This section focuses on detailed issues and recommendations that will help in analyzing the exercise objectives and highlight additional lessons learned during the exercise related activities. Many of these are paraphrased summaries from evaluator and controller notes.

Tabletop Exercise

The exercise consisted of a tabletop discussion of a simulated situation. Participants discussed issues in depth and made decisions using their knowledge of the Yurok Tribe Emergency Operations Plan. The exercise began with a briefing by the Facilitator to discuss the objectives of the exercise, ground rules, and communication and simulation procedures. A scripted brief was presented to the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) Director and participants that relayed the scenario and the current status of the initial disaster operations as it stood from the onset of the flood event. The Exercise Facilitator continued to inject updated information and problems encountered as the exercise continued.

Finding: There is minimal communication and coordination between the Humboldt County and Del Norte County Operational Areas and the Yurok Tribe. This is partly due to the lack of guidance on behalf of the State of California on how Tribal Nations and counties should work together in response to an emergency or catastrophic disaster.

Recommendations: Communication, coordination, and cooperation within and among the Yurok Tribe as well as the Humboldt and Del Norte County Operational Areas needs to be strengthened. There needs to be an established process for communications during an emergency or catastrophic disaster.

- The State of California needs to develop and adopt more clear and comprehensive, as well as culturally sensitive, authorities and statutes that will enable Tribal Nations and counties to communicate more efficiently and effectively in response to an emergency.
- Specific protocols and procedures need to be developed and/or followed in regards to what information is relayed to the Operational Area(s) by the Yurok Tribe and vice versa. All Tribes need to understand the importance of accurately assessing and communicating their emergency situation and resource needs through the appropriate channels. Emergency Operations Plans (EOP) should also be shared among all key stakeholders to increase the overall level of awareness.
- Pre-event relationships need to be initiated and strengthened along with the establishment of redundant communication links. The Operational Areas should recognize the high turnover among tribal emergency management staff and continually work to establish and strengthen these pre-event relationships, and tribal governments should regularly update all contact information.
- The Yurok Tribe should formalize an agreement with both the Humboldt and Del Norte County Office of Emergency Services (OES) that designates a

separate and permanent liaison to deal directly with the County that will be able to provide real-time information.

Finding: The interoperability of communications has been an issue among emergency first responders within and among the Yurok Tribe as well as the Humboldt and Del Norte County Operational Areas.

Recommendation: Establish a committee with participation from both the Operational Area(s) and the Yurok Tribe to identify best practices and develop and formalize communication interoperability procedures and an overall strategic plan to guide collective communication interoperability goals. A Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) and interoperable communications solutions need to be utilized for multi-agency coordination during field operations in the event of an emergency. A unified approach to communications interoperability and leveraging of existing partnerships will help to ensure that communication equipment, procedures, and systems are operable across jurisdictions.

Finding: The Yurok Tribe is still in the early stages of developing a Standardized Emergency Management System (SEMS) / National Incident Management System (NIMS) compliant emergency organizational structure.

Recommendations: The Yurok Tribe needs to develop a clear and comprehensive strategy for emergency response and decision-making in coordination with the functions of the Yurok Emergency Operations Center (YEOC) according to the Incident Command System (ICS).

- Designated emergency management staff and partnering agencies need to understand that the Planning Section coordinates with the other Unit Sections in the development of an Incident Action Plan (IAP) early on in the operations that include operational periods and measurable key objectives. Regular planning meetings and an IAP planning cycle need to be established for the duration of operations. The Yurok Tribe should regularly conduct comprehensive ICS Section training that will discuss, outline, and clarify the functions of each Section/Group.
- Assistance from the Operational Area(s) as well as the State of California, including joint training opportunities, should be more regularly available to the Yurok Tribe as well as other Tribal Nations that are working to develop emergency operations plans and an Incident Command Structure.
- A formalized exercise schedule should be developed for the specific participation of the Yurok Tribe and the Operational Area(s) to work on the development of a joint/unified Incident Command Post (ICP), and to enhance coordination and relationship-building between the Yurok Tribe, Operational Area(s) and other key response agencies.

Finding: The remote location and isolated areas of the Yurok Tribe Reservation make it difficult to develop and execute an alert and notification system and established protocols.

Recommendations: More robust pre-planning efforts need to be conducted to identify the remote areas and isolated locations of Yurok Reservation citizens. The Yurok Tribe needs to establish a more formalized process for alerting and notifying Tribal and non-Tribal member that is acknowledged and recognized among all members of the Yurok Tribe. This information should also be shared and coordinated as necessary with the Humboldt and Del Norte County Operational Areas.

- The Yurok Tribe in cooperation with the Humboldt and Del Norte County Operational Areas needs to identify and clarify the trigger points that will activate the alert and notification system, and develop protocols for each level of activation for specific incidents.
- Clarify the public information distribution and alert and notification processes as well as identify redundant communication systems. The Yurok Tribe should look to public-private partnerships for solutions.

Finding: There is a general lack of understanding by Federal, Tribal, State and local entities in regards to the process for declaring an emergency for a Tribal Nation and its affect on subsequent Federal, State and local emergency declarations.

Recommendation: The process for emergency declarations on behalf of Tribal Nations needs to be clarified on the Federal, State and local level in compliance with the National Incident Management System and other related local, state and federal regulations. Once this process is clarified and supported by the Yurok Tribe and Operational Area(s), it should be mapped out for additional visual reference.

Finding: The requesting of resources through the Operational Area(s) on behalf of the Yurok Tribe is not a formalized process in compliance with the National Incident Management System.

Recommendations: The process in which resources are requested through the Operational Area(s) on behalf of Tribal Nations needs to be identified by and shared with all partnering agencies.

- Resource typing, identification, and prioritization needs to be initiated and/or enhanced within and among Tribal Nations and the Operational Area(s).
- The Tribes may or may not have the resources to contribute to the Operational Area, but nevertheless they can provide the assistance in getting the information out and quickly identifying where resources are needed.

Finding: The Yurok Tribe currently does not have a stockpile of emergency supplies.

Recommendations: The stockpiling of emergency supplies in strategic locations is vital to the Yurok Tribe due to its remote location and isolated areas of its Tribal members.

- Items such as generators, satellite phones, non-perishable food, water, medications, battery-powered radios, flashlights, extra batteries, matches in waterproof containers, and warm blankets should be considered for inclusion into the stockpile.

- A procedure needs to be developed along with the assignment of individuals that will be responsible for maintaining these supplies and ensuring that certain items are rotated and/or replenished.

Finding: The Yurok Tribe should continue to reach out more to the citizens of the Yurok Reservation that are located in the most isolated areas and prepare them to help in response to an emergency or catastrophic disaster.

Recommendations: The Yurok Tribe and its partnering agencies should continue to work to increase individual awareness of and family emergency preparedness through the continued development and enhancement of educational programs that are focused on both Tribal and non-Tribal members.

- The tribe should continue to work with both the Humboldt and Del Norte County Chapters of the American Red Cross to teach the citizens of the Yurok Reservation on what they can do to prepare for an emergency or catastrophic disaster, and assist families in the development of disaster kits.
- The Yurok Tribe should consider establishing Tribal Emergency Response Teams that will be crucial in initiating emergency first response to citizens in the remote locations of the Yurok Reservation. These teams should be self-contained, multi-purpose units comprised of citizens of the Yurok Reservation. Each team's members need to be trained to automatically organize and deploy as a unit following a major emergency, working in coordination with the Yurok Tribe Emergency Operations Plan.

Finding: A rapid damage and needs assessment needs to be accomplished immediately after the onset of the disaster so that mutual aid requests can be placed in a timely and formalized manner.

Recommendations: Establish a routine for obtaining information from the Yurok Emergency Operations Center and reviewing the situation status board to answer questions and make appropriate resource requests.

- The process for damage assessments needs to be formalized and adhered to by all entities in the Operational Area(s).
- The Yurok Tribe should develop a better understanding of post-incident stabilization efforts such as the collection of financial expenditures and disaster recovery estimates due to their significance in following Federal and State disaster policies and regulations.

Finding: The recovery process for the Yurok Tribe and other local Tribal Nations needs to be formalized in coordination with the Operational Area(s) and the State of California.

Recommendations: The recovery process for Tribal Nations needs to be identified and supported by all Federal, State and local entities.

- Administrative processes for post-disaster reimbursement and funding also need to be established and/or enhanced on behalf of Tribal Nations.

Finding: The Yurok Tribe has very few Mutual Aid Agreements and Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) in place with first responders and other partnering agencies and Tribal Nations.

Recommendation: The Yurok Tribe should continue to initiate and develop mutual aid agreements with key stakeholders and partnering agencies that can be utilized during an emergency or catastrophic disaster.

Finding: The Yurok Tribe does not have pre-event contracts established with specific vendors that can be enacted during an emergency situation.

Recommendations: The Yurok Tribe needs to initiate the execution of pre-event contracts with private vendors to specifically address resource allocation and prioritization in order to meet the demands of a surge in capacity, restoration of services, and food and shelter for victims and volunteers.

- The Yurok Tribe should also work with both Humboldt and Del Norte Counties to develop accountability/tracking system for special needs surge capacity.

Section 4: Conclusion

The Yurok Tribe has successfully taken on the responsibility of strengthening emergency preparedness, and has clearly taken the initiative to ensure an effective and efficient response to an emergency situation. The Emergency Management Staff displayed remarkable motivation in making sure that the exercise tested their strengths and their weaknesses in order to effect the most change within the Tribe's emergency management system. The discussion was engaging and educational to both participants and observers, and the feedback was equally useful and informative.

The tabletop exercise also helped identify gaps that existing in emergency plans, procedures and policies of the Yurok Tribe. Consequently, additional needs and actions were identified for follow-up and improvement, including the following key planning priorities.

Planning Priorities

Priority #1: The Yurok Tribe should continue to develop a clear and comprehensive strategy for emergency response and decision making in coordination with the functions of the Emergency Operations Center in compliance with the Incident Command System (ICS). The Tribe needs to regularly conduct comprehensive ICS section training that will discuss, outline, and clarify the functions of each section/group.

Priority #2: More cohesion should be evident between operations in the Yurok Tribe Emergency Operations Center and the Humboldt and Del Norte County Emergency Operations Centers. Constant coordination, communication and cooperation should be taking place between the EOCs. This will increase the accountability of resources that are assigned and tracked by the Operational Areas.

Priority #3: The Yurok Tribe needs to develop a comprehensive alert and notification system and protocols to ensure that all citizens of the Yurok Reservation can be alerted and notified of an incident and provided with situational status updates in a timely manner.

Priority #4: The Yurok Tribe should develop a comprehensive strategy for the sustainability of operations. A 24/7 rotation of Emergency Management Staff along with clear and coherent lines of succession needs to be confirmed. All stakeholders should have a common understanding as to when and how emergency operations will be activated and the responsibilities of each Tribal member throughout the event of the emergency.

Priority #5: The Yurok Tribe needs to specifically identify the essential services provided by the tribe and ensure that those services can be provided, especially to the elders and other vulnerable populations, in the event of a substantial loss of personnel and/or resources. The Yurok Tribe should work to build strategic partnerships, formalize mutual aid agreements, and initiate pre-event contracts with private vendors to specifically address resources allocation and prioritization in order to meet the demands of a surge in capacity, restoration of services, and food and shelter for victims and volunteers.

Priority #6: The Yurok Tribe should work to clarify public information needs and crisis/risk communications strategies/priorities within the Tribe in coordination with Federal, Tribal, State, Regional and local government levels. The Yurok Tribe needs to develop comprehensive procedures on how information will be coordinated and disseminated in the event of an emergency, and to ensure that emergency management staff are continually trained in the process by which information should be crafted, coordinated, and disseminated.

Appendix A: Exercise Scenario

Scenario Overview

December 27, 2007 through January 1, 2008

A series of winter storms with the possibility of significant precipitation is occurring over most of Northern California. These series of storms are perceived as dangerous because they follow a pattern of weather that has left the region's soil saturated. Conditions are consistent with the possibility of flooding, landslides and possible levee failures.

The National Weather Service (NWS) has deemed the series of storms a "Pineapple Express" indicating heavy, prolonged and unusually warm precipitation that may cause widespread snowmelt from the above normal snowpack. The storms are forecast to last up to eight days, including heavier than normal rain.

So far, within the Yurok Tribal Reservation, the rain has caused small stream flooding, with minor to moderate damage to local roads, parks, agricultural areas and structures in low-lying areas.

The Klamath River is at fifteen feet (flood stage) and is rising. Severe flooding is now expected for the Lower Klamath, including the Yurok Tribe Business District and homes along the river.

Humboldt, Del Norte, Siskiyou and Trinity Counties are all experiencing moderate flooding of low-lying areas and damage to roads and all have activated their respective Emergency Operations Centers (EOCs). In addition, both the Inland and Coastal Regional Emergency Operation Centers (REOCs) are activated as is the State Operations Center (SOC). Close coordination is occurring between the OA EOC's and the REOCs.

The NWS issues a Flood Watch for northwest California and includes reports for river levels at or near flood stage, including the Russian River, Cosumnes River, Smith River, Trinity River, Navarro River, Redwood Creek, Klamath River, Mad River, Van Duzen River, Susan River and Eel River.

The NWS Forecast Office in Eureka issues a statement for a Flood Watch for the Lower Klamath River. This is transmitted via EAS and EDIS by local and state emergency services and local media.

The Yurok Director of Emergency Services activates the YEOC at a Level I and directs all Departments and Tribal Personnel to review the Yurok Initial Response Checklists (YIRC) and be prepared for response. All emergency services personnel go on standby alert and the Yurok EOC maintains a two-hour communications watch.

Scenario I

January 2, 2008

Tribal members who live up-river are now reporting significant flooding around and within their homes. Unconfirmed reports indicate that the river is flowing over its banks in some areas. Severe flooding is expected to affect the Yurok Tribe Reservation in the coming days.

The Yurok Director of Emergency Services has upgraded the YEOC to Level II, activated the Emergency Alert List (YEAL) and has directed all Tribal Departments to review their General Response Checklists. Mutual aid agreements are also reaffirmed with neighboring communities and tribes that are out of the floodplain. This includes regular contact with both the Del Norte and Humboldt Operational Area EOCs.

As many tribal members and non-tribal members located on the Reservation as possible are notified of imminent severe flooding through the use of EAS and local media. However, due to intermittent communications and power, the message has been inconsistent. Nevertheless, probable flood zones are broadcast by radio and television. Citizens in these areas are advised about procedures for preparing for a flood.

A mud and rock slide on Highway 169 at Ke'pel has been reported, blocking a potential evacuation route. In addition, several roads on the Yurok Tribe Reservation are becoming impassable and Hwy 96 is becoming compromised due to low-lying flooding.

Worried tribal members are congregating at Yurok Tribal Headquarters wondering what to do about the elders and individuals with special needs that require assistance. In addition, there are numerous requests by citizens for supplies or assistance with leaving the area.

The YEOC has been unable to make contact with all residents on the Reservation so there is not a good accounting of the status of all residents.

Power and communications on the Reservation have been interrupted or are intermittent.

Regionally, both Del Norte and Humboldt Counties are experiencing significant flooding now and are deploying crews and facilitating numerous request for assistance. Local emergencies for Del Norte and Humboldt Counties have been declared due to the flooding.

Scenario II

January 3, 2008

The National Weather Service has issued a Flood Warning for the Klamath River. The Yurok Director of Emergency Services has upgraded the YEOC to a Level III, and has requested EAS and media messages on evacuation routes, transportation, and shelters for residents within the Yurok Tribe Reservation.

Flooding has been reported at the confluence of the Trinity and Klamath Rivers, threatening Weitchpec. The Martins-Ferry Bridge at Weitchpec is being overtopped by flood waters and debris. Residents are congregating at the Weitchpec Elementary School looking for assistance and shelter. Pierson's Store has been overrun for supplies and some minor looting is being reported.

Unconfirmed and sketchy reports are received that the Klamath-Glen Levee has failed and is flooding homes in the Klamath-Glen area. People are trapped and need assistance. Reports are also received via a cellular 9-1-1 that there are at least two structure fires in the Klamath-Glen community.

Upon request from Humboldt and Del Norte Counties, the Governor has proclaimed a State of Emergency for Northern California counties and has asked the President for a Federal Disaster Declaration.

CalTrans has reported that the Highways 96 and 169 are closed in several locations due to wash out and/or mudslides. Hwy 101 is closed due to water and debris just south of the Bear Bridge as well as between Big Lagoon and Orick due to flooding and large amounts of debris. California Highway Patrol has established road blocks.

Several propane tanks from residences and businesses have floated off their standards and are bobbing through the floodwaters. Some of the tanks' valves are broken and propane is leaking out.

Resorts along the Hwy 101 corridor are now flooded and owners are seeking assistance. The Margaret Keating Elementary school is also flooded.

January 4, 2008

Worried residents are wondering where to go and what to do.

A van carrying 8 to 10 people trying to evacuate is reported to have overturned and is off the embankment on Hwy 169 at Sergon. People are trapped and there are several injuries.

Power and communications is out to all parts of the Yurok Tribe Reservation. At this point, the Department of Public Health issued a warning about contaminated water supplies.

Reports of trapped livestock and other farm animals are received as well as several dead or dying livestock accumulating in debris piles along the river.

YEOC officials anticipate floodwaters so high that one temporary shelter adjacent to Tribal Headquarters must now be evacuated. Due to the power being out on all parts of the Yurok Tribe Reservation, the YEOC and Tribal Headquarters are on generator power. The water supply is now contaminated and residents well out of the floodplain are required to use emergency water supplies. Fuel for vehicles and equipment is now on very short supply.

Scenario III

January 20, 2008

River-levels have begun to go down allowing for better access for damage assessments to be conducted. Preliminary figures indicate that as many as 400 homes and businesses within the Yurok Tribe Reservation may have been damaged or destroyed. Roughly 600 residents are without a place to live and are seeking assistance from the Yurok Tribal Government. The Red Cross as well as both Del Norte County OES and Humboldt County OES has been assisting with short-term shelters, but is working with the Tribal Government to transition evacuees into longer term accommodations. Long-term housing capabilities are an issue, and given the state of major road and highway damage, getting building supplies into the area is problematic.

The Indian Health Service is experiencing an increased number of individuals seeking assistance for crisis counseling and health-related matters. There are a number of questions from residents about when children can get back to school and where will classes take place.

Highways 169 and 101 sustained significant damage and local, state and federal highway and public works agencies indicate that it will be months to get them cleared or repaired. Tremendous amounts of debris have been deposited impacting catch basins, roads and highways and other access areas to the Yurok Tribe Reservation. In addition, the damage to tribal fisheries, livestock, and other sustainment programs is high and there is a long-term economic impact concern for the Yurok Tribe and its residents. Large areas of culturally-sensitive lands have been either damaged or destroyed.

Power and water are still out in the remote areas within the Reservation. There is a long-term need for potable water.

Tribal members continue to seek information about assistance and support programs.

Appendix B: Participant Feedback Summary

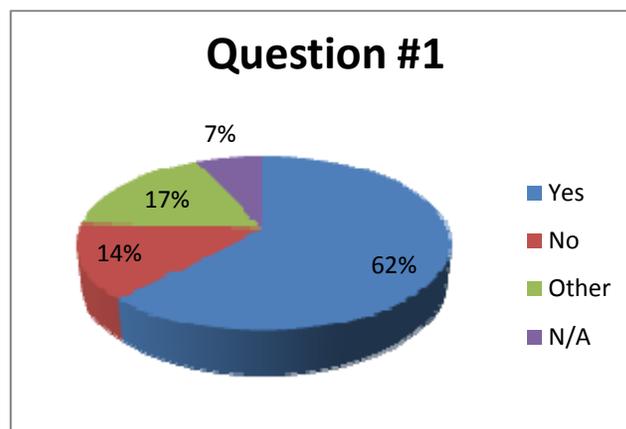
Participants were asked to evaluate the exercise and assess the accomplishment of the goals as well as provide feedback and recommendations. The collection of feedback was conducted via an individual questionnaire and a general “hotwash” session which provided group discussion and feedback immediately following the exercise.

- A total of twenty-nine (29) responses were received.
- Questions #1 and #2 were worded to have specific “yes” or “no” answers. The “n/a” is a no answer or left blank without any details provided by the participant. The “other” response reflects a detailed answer but did not fall into the “yes” or “no” category.
- Question #3 did not have a “yes” or “no” response. Instead, a rating was developed to find a range for specific details on the responses. The rating is as follows: “fully prepared,” “somewhat prepared,” and “unprepared.”
- Question #4 lists the top answers provided by participants. A significant number of responses noted communication and coordination as well as integrated training for both groups would be necessary. In addition, a lack of resources was highlighted as a major hurdle in achieving overall emergency preparedness goals.
- Question #5 allowed participants to provide additional comments.

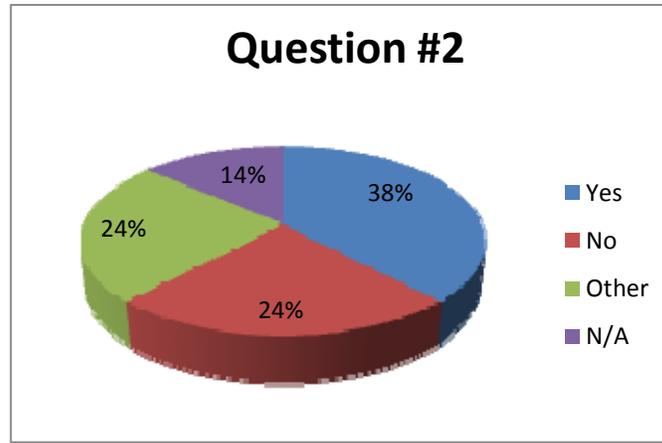
Overall, the consensus among participants was that the tabletop exercise was very productive and informative as well as helped highlight the need for continued efforts. The Yurok Tribe and both Humboldt and Del Norte County Operational Areas want and need to work together, but participants noted that past issues might prohibit productive movement forward.

Questions

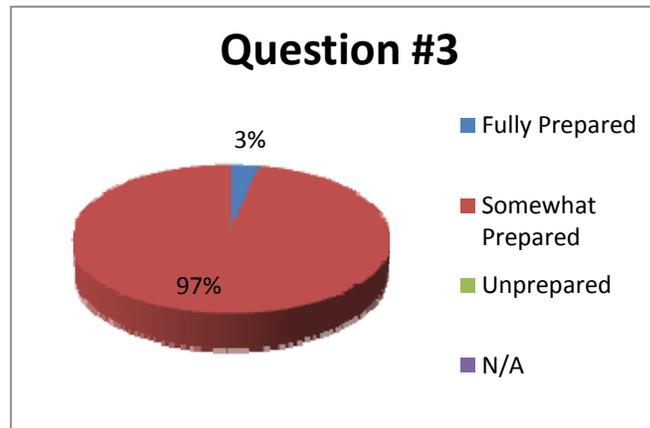
- I. Did you gain knowledge today that you did not previously possess regarding Emergency Operations at the Yurok Tribe and mutual aid partnerships in response to a catastrophic disaster?



2. Do you feel you have a better understanding of your role in the emergency operations structure and utilizing mutual aid partnerships? Please explain your answer.



3. How prepared do you feel the Yurok Tribe is to respond to a catastrophic disaster? Please explain your answer.



4. In your opinion, what are the valuable lessons learned from this exercise in regards to strengthening the relationships between tribal governments and public/private sector entities?

- Increased communication and coordination (24 participants)
- Identified the need and process for establishing cooperative agreements and mutual aid agreements (3 participants)
- Acknowledged the need for continued efforts and training (4 participants)
- Opportunity for inter-tribal networking (2 participants)

- Clarification of federal, state, and local support of tribal emergency response programs (1 participant)
- Acknowledged issues between tribal and non-tribal government entities (1 participant)
- Identified the limited resources that will be available during a catastrophic disaster (1 participant)

5. Additional Comments

- Tribes need to develop volunteer groups, communication, resources and individual family preparedness.
- Hands-on exercise and training are vital if we want to create a community that can understand each other's needs and capabilities prior to a disaster or emergency.
- The exercise turned into a gripe session which is beneficial at times, but mirrored much of the information at the previous meeting. Not sure if much progress was made.
- Hats off to you all. This has needed attention for many years. Everyone [needs to] understand that we all have a role and responsibility to protect our citizens.
- [The exercise was] well worth the time that I invested today.
- [This is a] good foundation to build on.
- Yurok Tribe has been working hard, but other tribes have not.