

1-1-1998

Huckleberry story: building a bridge between culture and science

Bodie K. Shaw

Oregon State University, Extension Service, Corvallis

Edward C. Jensen

Oregon State University, Extension Service, Corvallis

Follow this and additional works at: <http://digitalcommons.usu.edu/nrei>

Recommended Citation

Shaw, Bodie K. and Jensen, Edward C. (1998) "Huckleberry story: building a bridge between culture and science," *Natural Resources and Environmental Issues*: Vol. 7, Article 72.

Available at: <http://digitalcommons.usu.edu/nrei/vol7/iss1/72>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Quinney Natural Resources Research Library, S.J. and Jessie E. at DigitalCommons@USU. It has been accepted for inclusion in Natural Resources and Environmental Issues by an authorized administrator of DigitalCommons@USU. For more information, please contact becky.thoms@usu.edu.



THE HUCKLEBERRY STORY: BUILDING A BRIDGE BETWEEN CULTURE AND SCIENCE

Bodie K. Shaw¹ and Edward C. Jensen²

¹ Extension Agent, OSU Extension Service,
P.O. Box 430, Warm Springs, OR 97761. shawb@oes.orst.edu

² Associate Professor of Forest Biology, College of Forestry,
Oregon State University, Corvallis, OR 97330.
jensene@cmail.orst.edu

“Wi’wnu”—big huckleberry—plays a prominent role in the lives of Pacific Northwest Indians. As a food and as a symbol, it is deeply rooted in their culture and their heritage. For many, it is a link to their past; for others it is a bridge to their future.

Despite their obvious importance, huckleberries—and the culture that surrounds them—are facing difficult times on many tribal lands. Young people growing up today are not as familiar with huckleberry traditions as their elders would like, and the huckleberry resource itself is dwindling, as long-productive fields are being invaded by trees and plants are losing vigor.

This 20-minute, award winning educational video addresses both challenges. The first half of the video features interviews with tribal elders from the Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs in central Oregon. In moving passages the elders describe the importance of huckleberries to the lives of Northwest Indians, both for sustenance and for ritual. The second half of the video features a prominent US Forest Service researcher who explains how to rejuvenate historically important huckleberry fields and how to maintain their productivity over time. This educational approach, combining heritage and science, will provide a culturally important resource for years to come.

Produced in partial fulfillment of the requirements for a Master’s degree in Natural Resource Education and Extension, this project also provides an intriguing model that other graduate students might like to emulate.