

Our mission: “To protect and restore marine and terrestrial ecosystems through scientific research and local community, place based partnerships.”

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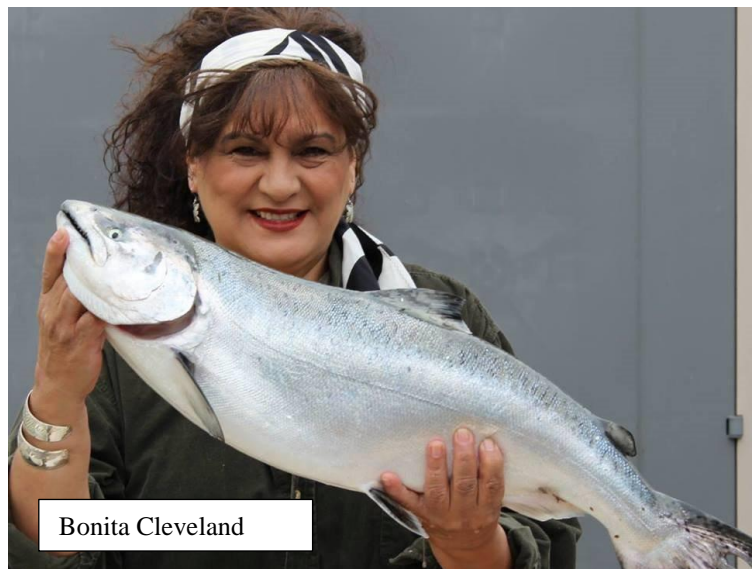
CWI Recognizing Bonita Cleveland Leadership

The Coastal Watershed Institute regularly celebrates women leaders in science, natural resources, and communities. In this recognition we pay tribute to and acknowledge the leadership of Bonita Cleveland, Quileute Nation leader, elder and fast friend.

Coastal Watershed Institute staff first met Bonita over 30 years ago when working for the Quileute Tribe on the newly created President’s Forest Plan. Over the course of the 18-month project, Bonita led sentinel components of the first federal Watershed Analysis, including the first, pilot Cultural Module, that has since become a standard federal tool for watershed management.

[President’s Forest Plan Watershed Analysis](#). This work insured that Tribal cultural resources are formally and consistently incorporated as natural resources in watershed

management processes. Her strong positive collaborative mentoring, leadership, and friendship, contributed substantially to the formation of the Coastal Watershed Institute, and for which Bonita still contributes to as an executive advisor 30 years later.



Bonita Cleveland

Bonita’s leadership is far ranging. She is a board member of Salmon Defense <https://salmondefense.org/>, who’s mission is to ‘Protect and Defend Pacific Northwest Salmon and Salmon Habitat’, and the development of a hundred-year plan for salmon. Her biography there presents clearly Bonita’s leadership, and follows: *“Bonita Cleveland Reames, a citizen of the Quileute Nation was born and raised on the coast and is the eldest of Charles and Shirley Cleveland’s five children. Her mother Shirley Cleveland was a lifelong Quileute fish warrior from the small fishing village of La Push, Washington, and she raised Bonita to follow in her footsteps. During the fish wars Bonita was a fish warrior and was actively involved in the fight that led to the Boldt decision. She joined Billy Frank Jr’s “fish-ins” by exercising her treaty protected right to fish within her usual and accustomed area when the State of Washington deemed it*

illegal, which resulted in her forcible arrest and her fish, fishing gear and truck being impounded.

Bonita has served on the Quileute Tribal Council for over 10 years in the role of Chairman, Treasurer, Secretary, and member. For over 17 years she has also served



Bonita Cleveland with Salmon Defense founder and fellow member Billy Frank and NWIFC staff Sheila McCloud.



Bonita Cleveland and family

on numerous Business Committees for Quileute, including the Enterprise Board, School Board, Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission (NWIFC) Policy Representative, Culture Committee, and other leadership roles. Additionally, Bonita was an instrumental Chairwoman for the Quileute Tribal Council in working with Congress in obtaining land for the protection and safety of their people moving to higher ground out of the immediate tsunami zone. Many milestones were achieved; Bill 1162 & Bill 636 were passed under her and her team's watch. Cleveland continues to serve on the Quileute Natural Resources Committee, the Enrollment Committee, and the Quileute Elders Panel. She has been an employee of Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission for 20 years, currently as the Coastal Administrative Assistant. Previously she was the owner and

operator of Orca Helicopters, the fishing vessel Midnight Gambler and several river fishing boats for many years during her youth. Bonita has worked directly for her tribe as a health clinic nurse and assistant, Housing Director, Executive Director, and Cultural Resources Lead. Bonita is dedicated to working as part of a cohesive unified cultural team among other traditional positions she stays heavily involved in."

Her colleague on the north Olympic Peninsula, W. Ron Allen, Chairman/CEO Jamestown S’Klallam Tribe, offers:

“Bonita has been one of the strong, steady Northwest Tribal leader warriors for many years standing strong for Tribal sovereignty and Treaty Rights. She has a deep spiritual commitment to salmon and habitat as well as the many other community needs of her people.”



Bonita Warner and fellow remarkable woman and friend Nellie Ratliff, Quilute Nation.

The Coastal Watershed Institute Board of Directors, Executive Committee,

Senior Fellows, and staff have high respect for Bonita’s leadership that she (and fellow remarkable woman Nellie Ratliff) continues to provide. We encourage all to celebrate and elevate this remarkable woman leading natural resource science and culture.