

Intertribal Workshops on Climate Variability and Change

June 20, 2013



With the support of the South Central Climate Science Center (SC-CSC) and the Southern Climate Impacts Planning Program (SCIIPP), five Intertribal Workshops on Climate Variability and Change are taking place this summer (4 in Oklahoma and one in New Mexico) under the leadership of Laurel C. Smith, an assistant professor in the Department of Geography and Environmental Sustainability at the University of Oklahoma (OU). These one-day events introduce tribal representatives to the SC CSC, the Landscape Conservation Cooperatives that service its

region (OK, TX, LA, NM), and a couple of tools that help communities understand and plan for drought, one of the costliest conditions characterizing the climate of the Southern Plains. These workshops also propose a participatory video approach to climate education and impacts documentation.

At the heart of this project is the research of Paulette Blanchard, a graduate of Haskell Indian Nations University. She is also a veteran of many workshops and symposia dedicated to considering climate change in Indian Country, and is not a Masters student at OU's department of Geography and Environmental Sustainability. Paulette seeks to blend tribal perspectives with climate science in ways that might respect, enrich and sustain the natural and cultural resources distinguishing the places Native Peoples call home. She wants to know how video-mediated climate data might be used to document the impacts of environmental transformations, as well as the capabilities and needs of the region's tribal nations. Paulette's research commitments also inform the videos concurrently being produced by two Native media makers, Filoteo Gómez Martínez and Jeffery Palmer, who are part of this project. These videos will showcase lessons about climate change learned from research participants.