

November Special Offering: The Mountain Maidu

November is Native American Heritage Month so our special offering will go to the **Maidu Summit Consortium**. The Mountain Maidu are slowly reclaiming their homeland in the upper Feather River watershed and restoring their land to ecological and spiritual health. The Mountain Maidu people have been incredibly resilient in the face of genocide, government betrayal, and loss of land. Let us be generous in helping them reclaim their land and heritage.

Here is some background information on the Maidu Summit Consortium.

The Mountain Maidu homeland includes the upper Feather River watershed, an area extending from Oroville up to headwaters near places now known as Beldon, Portola, Taylorsville, Greenville, and Chester. Throughout California's history, much of the Mountain Maidu people's land was taken or purchased (mostly by coercion) by the government, cattle, timber, and hydroelectric interests. This history is recounted in detail in Beth Rose Middleton's book *Upstream: Trust Lands and Power on the Feather River* (University of Arizona Press, 2018). Middleton is Professor of Native American Studies at UCD.

In 2003, PG&E, the ultimate hydroelectric interest on the Feather River, declared bankruptcy and was forced to divest of their land. The various Mountain Maidu groups joined together as the Maidu Summit Consortium and petitioned for the PG&E land, and in 2019 they were finally granted nearly 3000 acres in Humbug Valley near Lake Almanor and the town of Chester. Since then, they have been in the process of acquiring more land and restoring the Humbug Valley. Some of their forested land and homes were burned in the recent Dixie fire, but thankfully their office in Chester and about 200 acres of their forest land, including the location where they plan to build a museum and culture center, was untouched by the fire, and their meadowland actually benefitted from the fire.

So how will our church's special offering help them? They are trying to obtain funds to hire a restoration project director who will supervise all aspects of meadow and forest restoration. They need funds for removing hazard (dead) trees so they can safely access their forest lands. They continue to leverage funds for government and nonprofit grants that will enable them to acquire more of their ancestral lands. And they continue planning for construction in 2-3 years of the museum and culture center that will educate the public about tribal history and culture. Although they were impacted by the Dixie Fire, they were not devastated by it. They still have staff, land, and multiple projects, they just need more money to implement it all!

Please be generous in helping these brave and resilient people as they work to reclaim their land and heritage.