

2019 SKOMP DISTINGUISHED LECTURE

March 22, 2019 | 11 am–12:30 pm | Morrison Hall 007



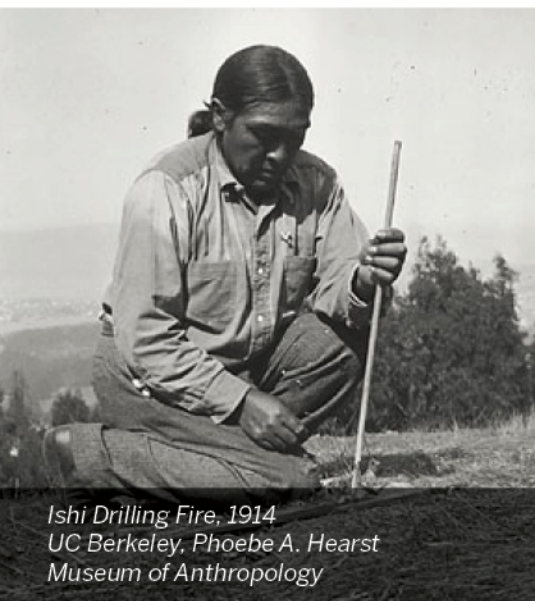
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Catastrophic Fires, Colonialism, and Indigenous Landscape Practices:

The Relevancy of Archaeology in Rethinking the Stewardship of Public Lands in California

California is currently facing a crisis of catastrophic wildfires. While the causes are many, a crucial factor was Euro-American colonialism that prohibited indigenous landscape practices and ushered in more than a century of fire suppression. The lecture outlines the historical roots of the fire crisis in California and discusses the role that archaeology can play in rethinking our current stewardship of public lands. I highlight an on-going research program that examines the scale and chronology of indigenous landscape management practices in Central California prior to fire suppression policies. A collaborative team of scholars from the Amah Mutsun Tribal Band, California State Parks, UC Berkeley, and UC Santa Cruz are implementing an inter-disciplinary approach for the study of anthropogenic burning using ecological, archaeological, and anthropological data sets. Our ultimate goal is to consider how eco-archaeological research can provide useful information for the contemporary management of public lands, such as enhancing the richness and diversity of native species, improving the health of biological communities, and minimizing the risks of catastrophic fires. The research team is exploring how lessons from the past can directly contribute to the development of new protocols for the contemporary management of public spaces that are rooted in the deep history of tribal practices.



Ishi Drilling Fire, 1914
UC Berkeley, Phoebe A. Hearst
Museum of Anthropology



Reception to follow: 5:30–7:30 pm at the
Glenn A. Black Laboratory of Archaeology

