



2852 Willamette #125, Eugene, OR 97405 | 541-338-7671 | fusee@fusee.org | www.fusee.org

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For more info: Ryan Reed, Karuk Inaamvan and Hoopa Valley Tribal Member, 707-457-7952
Michael Beasley, FUSEE Board member, 479-287-9796

Wildland Firefighters and Native Youth Voice Support for '*Juliana v. US*' The Youth-Led Climate Lawsuit Offers Best Hope for Compelling Change in Federal Policies to Protect Communities and Forests with Ecological Fire Management

PORTLAND - Firefighters United for Safety, Ethics, and Ecology (FUSEE) joined youth from the Karuk Nation rallying on the steps of the Mark O. Hatfield District Courthouse in downtown Portland on Tuesday, June 4, 2019 to voice strong support for the '*Juliana v. US*' lawsuit against the Trump Administration. The youth-led lawsuit argues for a constitutional right of present and future generations to a healthy atmosphere and stable climate. A three judge panel from the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals held the hearing and will decide if the case will be permitted to go to trial.

"Wildfire has become the dominant specter of climate change in the west, but fearing and fighting all fires is part of the problem, not the solution to living with fire in a warming world," said Timothy Ingalsbee, executive director of FUSEE. "The youth climate lawsuit '*Juliana v. US*' offers our best hope for compelling fundamental change in federal fire policies to protect communities, restore forests, and stabilize the climate with ecological fire management rather than the endless, escalating, but unwinnable 'war' on wildfire."

"The Karuk people and nearly every other indigenous nation in North America survived long droughts and warm/dry periods in the past with our intentional use of fire on the land that helped protect villages from unwanted summer wildfires while also sustaining forests, fish populations, and a wide diversity of life," said Jessica Conrad, Karuk Tribal member. "Our philosophy of using fire to 'Renew the World' offers a model for society to survive climate change with a renewed relationship of respect for Mother Earth, all our plant and animals relations, and life-giving ecological processes such as fire."

"The planet is in trouble. Climate change has provided an unfortunate platform for Indigenous Knowledge (IK) to provide vital information and management actions in the form of place-based World Renewal religious concepts, and it is time to listen to the people who practice this wisdom," said Ryan Reed, Karuk Inaamvan (Karuk Spring Salmon Priest) and Hoopa Valley Tribal Member. "It is time for an Ecological Revolution in the name of humanity, and the '*Juliana v. US*' case holds great promise for younger generations who are the upcoming leaders of maintaining and sustaining the health of our Earth, and everything and everyone within it."

"Forests play a vital role in stabilizing the climate, and fire plays a vital role in building resilience and protecting stands of old trees, which are best for sequestering carbon," said Michael Beasley, veteran fire manager for the U.S. Forest Service and National Park Service and founding Board member of FUSEE. "Wildland firefighters would much rather be fire-lighters

doing ecological fire management to sustain native forests than trying to prevent fires from burning flammable tree farms planted in the wake of commercial logging."

Background:

'Juliana v. US' was originally filed in 2015 and was scheduled to begin trial on October 29, 2018 in federal district court in Eugene, Oregon, but the Trump Administration has thrown repeated legal maneuvers to avoid going to trial, including the current appeal before the Ninth Circuit. Given the urgency for government action to address the climate crisis, attorneys for the youth plaintiffs have also filed a motion for a preliminary injunction that would prevent the federal government from permitting any new leases for mining coal on public lands, leases for new offshore drilling of oil and gas, and blocking federal permits for new fossil fuel infrastructure projects. A positive ruling from the Ninth Circuit would move the trial forward in which testimony from some of the nation's top scientists, including wildland fire experts, would provide evidence making clear the role of fossil fuel burning in causing climate change and its effects fueling drought, flood, and fire disasters across the U.S.

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Click on links for copies of statements from [Timothy Ingalsbee and Michael Beasley](#), [Jess Conrad](#), and [Ryan Reed](#).

For more information: Ryan Reed 707-457-7952

Michael Beasley 479-287-9796