

O-ko-hó-í-wah is pronounced “o-ko-HO-EYE-wah.” It is one of the trail names in Greenhorn Park and was selected to represent the Shasta village once located near the confluence of Greenhorn and Yreka creeks.

The Shasta are an indigenous people of Northern California and Southern Oregon. They spoke one of the Shastan languages which include the Konomihu and Okwanuchu dialects.

The Shasta peoples were located primarily in the greater Shasta Valley and the mid-Klamath River Basin of Siskiyou County. They occupied at least six villages in the area of present day Yreka, where they made their sturdy homes of cedar and willow branches. These people were avid hunters and lived off of the land by eating acorns, deer, small game and salmon.

Their respect for the natural world allowed them to coexist in balance with nature for thousands of years.



WHO CAME BEFORE?

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Who Came Before?



Greenhorn Park's O-ko-hó-í-wah Trail



Okohóiwah was typical of the many Shasta villages located along local rivers and streams such as Yreka and Greenhorn creeks. Salmon and steelhead trout were an important food source for the Shasta people. Catching fish involved many methods including spears, hooks and lines, basket traps, nets, fish drives and weirs. Fish were roasted and eaten fresh, or split, smoked, dried and stored for future use. Nothing was wasted; even bones were crushed and stored for soup making.

Many Shasta traditional ceremonies center on salmon and the medicine it provided. The Shasta followed rules to protect the fishery, such as allowing the first salmon of the year to swim upstream unharmed. As soon as the first fish passed, fishing could begin, but that next fish could only be caught with a line rather than a spear. Other rules required men to remain celibate when net fishing and that no fish could be eaten until after the downriver Karuk tribe's White Deerskin Dance was performed.

Ocean-going salmon, steelhead trout and lamprey all persist within the Yreka Creek watershed, where agencies, groups and individuals are actively working to restore fish populations and their essential habitats.

For more information on the Shasta's way of life, see www.shastaindiannation.org/our_story or www.siskiyou.edu/shasta, and the County Museum.

A RICH HISTORY LIVES ON AT GREENHORN PARK

As you enjoy the trails and recreation areas of Greenhorn Park, imagine all those who have come before you. The land is rich with memory and culture if only we learn to read the signs. Can you think of how early people would have made their living among the oaks and animals of the area? Can you find the traces left by miners in their search for gold in Greenhorn Canyon? What will future generations be able to learn about us from the way we use the Park today?



This 1918 photo shows a Shasta woman collecting firewood in the area a few miles south of Yreka.