

ORAL HISTORY
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HOBBIT HOLE ORAL HISTORY

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My name is Regina Kong and I'm an undergraduate at Stanford University. I conducted interviews for the Hobbit Hole Oral History Project the summer before my sophomore year, from June to August 2019. The Hobbit Hole was a homestead and community gathering place for nearly four decades before the establishment of Inian Islands Institute, an ecological field school. To this day, the islands remain sacred to the indigenous Hoonah Tlingit, who made summer camps there until the arrival of Europeans in the early 1900s. My aim with this project is to preserve important community narratives surrounding the region's rich anthropological, ecological, and cultural history.

Zach Brown, the director and founder of Inian Islands Institute, initially proposed the project to me in order to fulfill a mission that Inian has not had the capacity to carry out in the past. I am immensely grateful to the funding I received from Stanford's Haas Center for Public Service, which awarded me their Donald Kennedy Public Service Fellowship. Moreover, this project has allowed me to integrate both my academic and personal interests in climate change education, environmental history, and cross-generational narratives. Most of my interviewees have been homesteaders and fishermen, and they have shared with me the most incredible stories. Although the interviews center around the history of the Hobbit Hole, they also reflect important aspects of a shared human experience, placing individual narratives within a greater context of our relationship to the natural world.