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Tribal Relations News

Director's Welcome

The Forest Service (FS) Tribal Relations Strategic Plan hinges on the goal of “leveraging partnership to maximize mutual success”—this allows us to meet the FS mission overall while better serving Tribes. This edition of the Office of Tribal Relations (OTR) Newsletter illustrates the value of partnerships and the great work we can all accomplish by working together. Great partnerships exist among Forest Service personnel in all areas of the Agency, between Agency staffs and individual Tribes and intertribal organizations, and between Federal Agencies to achieve a common goal. There are few things I enjoy more than recognizing our partners, so I’m happy to report that we have been presenting a lot of awards as of late. In this Newsletter, you can read about the award presented in Washington, DC to the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation for “Collaborative Aquatic Stewardship.” I was similarly delighted to present along with Janie Hipp, the Senior Advisor to Secretary Vilsack for Tribal Affairs, a

“Forest Service Partnership in Tribal Relations” award to the leaders of five Tribal Nations for their exceptional work in hosting the 2010 “To Bridge a Gap Conference.” Appropriately, the award was presented at the 2012 To Bridge a Gap Conference in Durant, Oklahoma, on April 5, 2012. The recipients were:

- ◆ Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma: Assistant Chief Gary Batton
- ◆ Chickasaw Nation: Governor Bill Anoatubby
- ◆ Muscogee (Creek) Nation: Second Chief Roger Barnett
- ◆ Caddo Nation: Chairman Brenda Shemayne Edwards
- ◆ Absentee Shawnee Tribe of Oklahoma: Tribal Historic Preservation Officer Henryetta Ellis

This is my opportunity to remind you that it is time to send in nominations for the next round of National Tribal Relations Awards, covering the calendar year of 2011. Any Forest Service

employee may nominate an individual or group for single or multiple award categories:

- ◆ Leadership in Tribal Relations Award
- ◆ Lifetime Achievement in Tribal Relations Award
- ◆ Partnership in Tribal Relations Award
- ◆ Tribal Relations Professional Excellence Award

If you have questions about the awards, please contact me or Pam Williams, OTR Administrative Assistant at pwilliams@fs.fed.us.

There is so much to share about the Forest Service’s ongoing and upcoming work with Tribes throughout the Forest Service - too much for one Newsletter. So please keep track of the latest accomplishments with this and future editions, and put our Web site (www.fs.fed.us/spf/tribalrelations) in your browser’s favorites list.

Tribal Research Update

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Leslie Weldon, Mary Wagner, Fred Clark, and Anne Zimmermann presenting the Collaborative Aquatic Stewardship Award to Mike Lambert at the Rise to the Future Awards Reception.



Gloria Owen being honored by Regional Forester Leslie Weldon at the Lolo National Forest's new pollinator garden at Fort Missoula. (Photo Credit: Joni Packard, US Forest Service)

“Well, I guess you could describe me as adventurous.”



Getting to Know Leslie Weldon

Leslie Weldon began her Forest Service career as a summer hire on the Mount Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest at the age of 19. She arrived on a Sunday evening, unprepared for the weather and terrain of the Pacific Northwest. She was directed to her quarters, a trailer behind the ranger station where she bunked for the next three months. She would spend that summer surveying spotted owls, monitoring regeneration efforts, and fighting wildfires. This initial experience did not in any way discourage her from working for the Forest Service, but set in motion her rise to a leadership role as the Deputy Chief of the National Forest System.

Growing up in the greater Washington, DC area, Leslie was exposed to area parks and forests in and around the Chesapeake Bay. However, her first Girl Scout camping trip would find her on the other side of the world, near Tokyo, Japan at Camp Tama exploring the outdoors in an international setting. Camp Tama recreation area is about a 60 minute drive from where her father was stationed at Tachikawa Air Force Base. She thoughtfully recalls her formative years and says “Well, I guess you could describe me as adventurous.”

Leslie attributes encouragement of senior staff around her in helping her develop confidence and learning to thoughtfully contribute

ideas to the discussions happening around her. She appreciates the value and importance of understanding one’s self and others, and what that means for working with different kinds of people and cultures including American Indians and Alaska Natives with their unique culture that ties them to natural resources. Early on through her appointment as a fisheries biologist, Leslie would begin to develop the socio-cultural foundations needed to work with Tribes near the Snoqualmie Forest. During her tenure as the fisheries biologist she interacted with Tribes on this very contentious, sensitive issue of salmon rights in the Pacific Northwest. She understood the need to cooperatively manage natural resources while recognizing the treaty rights of Tribes. She worked with the Mjakateiya and Tulalip Tribes, tribal salmon restoration crews, and Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fisheries Commission to ensure a healthy and sustainable salmon population for commercial and Tribal harvesting.

Leslie credits the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes and the Confederated Warm Spring Tribes with teaching her the value of effective government-to-government relationships. She fondly recalls spending a week with FS officers, from multiple agencies, in a workshop on understanding the Confederated Tribes’ perspective for natural resource

management. She saw how the tribal culture, history, and value system were the foundation for their management practices. This teaching from that workshop is something that helped her continue to build her understanding of Tribal relations with the FS.

Leslie has held biologist positions on the Mount Baker-Snoqualmie, at the National Headquarters, and in the Northern Regional Office. She also served as Stevensville District Ranger on the Bitterroot National Forest, as Liaison to the U.S. Army and as Executive Policy Assistant to former Forest Service Chief Michael Dombeck. Weldon was Forest Supervisor on the Deschutes National Forest from 2000 - 2007. Prior to her selection as Deputy Chief, Leslie was the Regional Forester in Montana.

Leslie and her husband, who happens to be a fisheries biologist, are very excited to be back in Washington after both have gained tribal relations insight through work with Tribes in the Pacific Northwest, Montana, and Oregon. She looks forward to using her Tribal relations background in the work ahead of her. She has the unique perspective of having worked at nearly every level of the Forest Service and uses her experience as filters to use in consideration of policy and directives that are made in headquarters and will be implemented in the field.

Partnering With Tribes on Landscape Restoration

The importance for new, creative collaborative initiatives increasingly defines the future direction of the Forest Service. An excellent example is the Eastern Regions partnership known as ZAAGKII Wings & Seeds Project, now in its fifth year. Partners and activities are cross-cultural, cross-generational, and multifaceted, while maintaining a consistent focus on landscape restoration. The program objectives and tools focus on the essential ecological roles that native plants and pollinators play in the sustainability of natural ecosystems. The project includes ethnobotany research, at-risk youth involvement, native plant restoration, regional tribal workshops, vocational mentoring, and technology transfer.

The word Zaagkii comes from the Ojibwe language and translates to "the loving gifts which come from the Earth." The name was suggested by elders from the Keweenaw Bay Indian Community as one helpful way to frame common efforts. The Zaagkii Project contin-

ues to collaborate with the USDA-FS and American Indian Tribes in plant restoration efforts across North America. Key focal points of a major partner, the Intertribal Nursery Council include: technology transfer and sharing, conservation education, preservation of ecological knowledge, reforestation, restoration, and nursery training. Meetings are held annually and participation is open to both tribal and non-tribal members who work for or with tribal agencies. Our partners have attended this meeting for three consecutive years and Dr. Scott Herron, an ethnobotanist of Anishinaabe (Odawa) lineage, remains a consultant for the Agency. Larry Heady, Eastern Region Tribal Relations Specialist USDA-FS, a Delaware (Lenape) tribal member, also serves as key advisor and liaison for tribal communities.

The five regional Tribes working with the Forest Service Eastern Region are the Keweenaw Bay

Indian Community, Hannahville (Potawatomi) Indian Community, Sault Ste. Marie Band of Chippewa Indians, and the Lac Vieux Desert Band of Chippewa Indians. Northern Michigan University's Center for Native American Studies also serves as a key partner in the cross-cultural mentoring program. The Cedar Tree Institute coordinates relationships and components of the Zaagkii Project in consultation with Jan Schultz, Botany, Non-Native Invasive Species, and Special Forest Products Program Leader of the USDA-FS Eastern Region.

For additional information regarding the ZAAGKII Wings & Seeds Project, please contact Larry Heady, R9 Tribal Relations Specialist at 414.297.3777 or lheady@fs.fed.us or Jan Schultz, R9 Botany NNIS Special Forest Products Pr. Leader, at 414.297.1189 or jschultz@fs.fed.us. You may also visit the Wings and Seeds Web site at www.wingsandseeds.org.



The first native plants greenhouse on an American Indian Reservation east of the Mississippi!

Partners and activities are cross-cultural, cross-generational, and multifaceted, while maintaining a consistent focus on landscape restoration.



Zaagkii Project Partners, photo courtesy of the FS Eastern Region



At-risk youth from Marquette County's Juvenile Court who have contributed 3,157 hours of community service to native plants and pollinator protection work.



INTERTRIBAL
AGRICULTURE COUNCIL
TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

"For thousands of years before the emigration of Europeans, USET Tribal ancestors used these sacred stone structures and landscapes to sustain the people's reliance on Mother Earth and the spirit energies of balance and harmony; these stone structures and landscapes remain of significant spiritual and cultural value today."

USET Resolution No. 2010:029

The Network: Helping Tribal People Help the Land

Through a collaborative effort between the U.S. Department of Agriculture Office of Tribal Relations and the Intertribal Agriculture Council, 12 Technical Assistance Centers – collectively known as “The Network” – were established in order to increase access, and use of USDA programs and services by American Indian producers and Tribes.

By working to streamline existing programs and assisting producers with the application process, the goal is to build a more functional relationship between USDA and Indian Country, while playing a role in the evolution of those programs over time.

The Network is trained to guide Indian producers and Tribes through the regulations and processes of Federal Agencies and can assist with everything from financial planning, to crop insurance, to conservation practices. The Network is also receiving training on Forest Service programs and services to better assist Indian country. The Network regions include: Alaska, Eastern, Eastern Oklahoma, Great Plains, Midwest, Navajo, Northwest, Pacific, Rocky Mountain, Southern Plains, Southwest, and the West. The Network is a new partner with the Office of Tribal Relations and we want to help make connections with other Forest Service employ-

ees and highlight the great work they are doing in Indian Country.

For additional information regarding the Network, please contact Zach Ducheneaux, Program Manager at (605) 964-8320 or zach@indianaglink.com. If you represent a Forest Service program area or forest and would like to provide information for the Forest Service Network training packet please contact Ericka Luna at 202-205-0980 or elluna@fs.fed.us. You can also visit the Intertribal Agricultural Council Technical Assistance Program Web site at <http://www.iactechhelp.com/regions/>

Ceremonial Stone Structures and Landscapes

The Forest Service's Eastern and Southern Regions and the United South and Eastern Tribes (USET), share a commitment to improving consultation, collaboration, and information necessary to identify and preserve enigmatic stone features and related ceremonial stone landscapes on National Forest System lands in the east. Some USET member tribes and tribal members ascribe cultural, traditional and spiritual connections to such features, with verification from several State Historic Preservation Offices, and are encouraging a partnership with the agency to raise awareness of the sensitivity of these features and for preserving them, intact, without direct or indirect impacts to their physical integrity.

Enigmatic Stone Features are generally defined as human-manipulated rock alignments, berms, piles, cairns, standing stones, effigies, mounds, niches, dolmens, etc. located across the landscape from New England to southern Appalachia. At least in the Southern Region, these landscape features may be constructed of soil or marine or freshwater shell. USET tribes, and some professional researchers, have noted similarities in the layout, structure, design and alignment of such features throughout the South and East. Due to relatively “intact” landscapes, many stone features and sites remain observable on NFS lands in the East.

In the Southern Region, the FS

and USET are collaborating on a pilot study on the Talladega National Forest in Alabama to identify and record (through non-destructive mapping and remote sensing technology) a sampling of stone alignment sites on the forest. The Pilot Study, under the auspices of an MOU with USET (or its Tribal nations), will set the stage for expanded investigations elsewhere in the Southern and Eastern Region. The pilot project will begin in March 2012 with LIDAR data gathered by U.S. Geological Survey in partnership with the Forest Service. This remote sensing data will help focus additional noninvasive on-the-ground work later in 2012.

Continued on Page 8.

A Forest Restoration, Job Creating, Success Story!

The Klamath Tribe is rooted in the forests. Strong connections to their forested homeland make continued and active work on those landscapes a cultural and economic imperative. It comes as no surprise then that Klamath forestry professionals are developing and carrying out their connection through restoration projects and expanding their capabilities in small business. The Forest Service is proud to have been a partner in the evolution of training, capacity building, and creating opportunities that have put the Klamath Tribal Forest Crews to work.

The beginnings of this success story go back to September 2005, when the Forest Service and the Society of American Foresters (SAF) entered into a participating agreement to build capacity of American Indians and Alaskan Natives for forest restoration contracting activities. Separate modules were developed and piloted for Forest Restoration Skills and Small Business Training.

Expanding on the pilot project in April 2009, the Salish and Kootenai College (SKC) Forestry Program Instructors Adrian Leighton and Rob Kenning agreed to teach the Forest Restoration Skills sessions. SKC was chosen because it is the only tribal college that offers a 2 year forestry technician and 4 year forestry degree and has full time forestry instructors. One of their first training sessions was with the Klamath Tribes, in cooperation with the Fremont-Winema National Forests. The training

focused on thinning, tree marking, planting, Wildland fire certification and crew development, chain saw certification, and forest restoration equipment.

The SKC training was followed by Indian Development Resources Solution (IDRS) working directly with the Tribe and the Forest to identify areas on interest, issues and solutions. The Forest Restoration Skill and Small Business Training name was shortened to "Woods Work." Through the work that the SKC and IDRS accomplished, the Woods Work training served as the catalyst for the Klamath Tribal Forest Crew (KTFC) to apply for American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) funding.

The Klamath Tribe was awarded a \$1.436 million ARRA grant to assemble and train the KTFC, a crew comprised of tribal members and the first in over 50 years. The Tribe wanted to create a self-sustaining crew to contract forest improvement work, and in the process actively pursue and secure sustainable professional relationships with a variety of agencies, business, and private land owners.

The IDRS provided a two month intensive training to two 10-person crews. The training included team building, technical advice, and ongoing mentoring. KTFC completed ten restoration training projects ranging from 10 to 450 acres through cooperative agreements with the Forest Service. While most of the projects

were hand crew and restoration related, crew leaders incorporated, taught, and demonstrated GPS and mapping skills during projects. As the crew matured, they took on a new name: the Forest Warriors. Randy Henry, Tribal Forester, said the final 16-member Forest Warriors crew is acknowledged for working exceptionally hard and for the members' skills and experience.

Current partnerships range from private owners, US Forest Service, the Nature Conservancy, IDRS, US Fish and Wildlife Service, Klamath Lake Land Trust, Lomakatsi Restoration Project, and parks and recreation services. These partnerships' continued support will provide on-project training for Tribal members and develop workforce capacity for the long-term implementation of forest and watershed restoration project in the Upper Klamath Basin. This includes a 10-year Master Stewardship Agreement and Supplemental Project agreement with the Fremont-Winema National Forest to implement forest and watershed projects that includes the 1 million acres inclusive the Klamath Tribe's ancestral lands.

For additional information from the Tribe please contact Randy Henry, Klamath Tribal Forester, at randy.henry@klamathtribes.com or (541) 880-6786. For information regarding the Fremont-Winema please contact Amy Gow-an at (541) 883-6741 or agowan@fs.fed.us.



Steven Fitzgerald, Oregon State University explaining Forest Ecology. Training consisted of both lecture and field exercises.

The Woods Work program was developed to train tribes on how to effectively utilize the Tribal Forest Protection Act provisions for contracting with the Forest Service to perform forest restoration work.



Randy Henry, Klamath Tribal Forester



Gypsy Moth Destruction

“In 2012, a total of \$958,000 will be allocated to fund 16 projects on Tribal land.”



Western Spruce Budworm

Forest Service & BIA Forest Health Projects

Every year the Forest Service (FS) works in cooperation with the Department of the Interior (DOI) to fund forest health projects on Tribal lands. From the time of the call for proposals to the funding of projects, several steps must occur that may seem confusing at first glance. To help make this process clearer, the FS Forest Health Protection staff has broken down the process and provided contact information for anyone who might have questions.

Congress authorizes the FS to provide funding for projects through the Cooperative Forestry Assistance Act for the purpose of protecting trees and forests from insects and diseases. This is accomplished directly on National Forest System lands, and in cooperation with other federal agencies, states, private landowners, and tribal governments.

By September 15 of each year, the FS requests proposals for forest insect and disease suppression projects for potential funding in the subsequent fiscal year and coordinate the project review and approval processes with DOI. However, prior to this, FS and DOI staff's along with Tribal forestry staff should work together to organize and perform general forest insect and disease field

surveillance and identifying their potential pest management needs. DOI field units can get technical assistance from the FS and must submit biological evaluations



Sudden Oak Death!

prepared by the local or regional FS Forest Health Protection specialists before the FS can consider funding forest insect and disease suppression project proposals.

DOI and Tribal lands. They also perform field surveillance and specialized detection surveys, as necessary, to supplement information shared with the FS.

Once the project proposals are submitted, DOI and FS staffs evaluate each proposal for effectiveness of proposed treatment, cost effectiveness, and biological need versus the other proposals from DOI.

When projects are selected, the FS transfers funds to DOI who then administers them to Tribes and helps to monitor project success. DOI provides a report on forest insect and disease suppression project accomplishments to the FS by November 1 of each year covering all the projects funded by the FS the previous fiscal year.



Emerald Ash Borer

Throughout the year, DOI employees can receive training by the FS in techniques for detecting, monitoring, preventing, and suppressing destructive forest insects and diseases. DOI facilitates forest insect and disease detection and monitoring activities and biological evaluations on

In 2012, a total of \$958,000 will be allocated to fund 16 projects on Tribal land. For additional information on forest health or Tribal projects please contact Bob Rabaglia at (703) 605-5338 or brabaglia@fs.fed.us.

Historic Impacts, Historic Solutions on Meacham Creek

Each year, the Forest Service recognizes the achievements of staff and others who have made a significant impact on watershed health across the United States – people who are making a true difference on the ground and in their communities – with its “Rise to the Future” (RISE) awards for excellence in natural resource management and education. On March 28, 2012 Mike Lambert, Umatilla Basin Habitat Project Leader for the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation (CTUIR) was presented with the award for “Collaborative Aquatic Stewardship.” One of fourteen recipients of this year’s RISE awards, Mike was acknowledged at a ceremony in Washington, DC for his yeoman’s work in an historic partnership with the Umatilla National Forest and others to restore a 1.1 mile reach of Meacham Creek, a major tributary of the Umatilla River.

Long a place of traditional and subsistence harvest for the CTUIR, Meacham Creek was severely degraded by historic Union Pacific Railroad operations, which had extensively altered the floodplain with miles of dikes to protect the tracks. This project sought to restore the historic stream channel along with habitat for endangered Middle Columbia River steelhead and bull trout in this high-priority watershed. In tandem with this goal, the project was undertaken to honor the First Foods mission of the CTUIR. First Foods is the basis for all

Tribal natural resource management and is the principle by which the Tribe seeks to restore the native foods of the community and take responsibility for water, which is essential to sustain all life. This restoration project focused on that very water, a stretch of Meacham Creek that runs contiguously through .5 miles of the Umatilla National Forest (UNF) and .6 miles of Tribal fee land. It was a first-of-its-kind project for both CTUIR and the UNF, and one of the largest the CTUIR and the UNF have ever taken on.

Key to this project’s success was a dizzying array of committed partners, beginning with UNF Engineering staff and hydrologists, botanists, and others, who made the project possible through their expertise and experience. This collaboration was made possible by a participating agreement, authorized by the Wyden Amendment, between the Tribe and UNF that allowed each to leverage their respective resources to a degree seldom seen elsewhere. A slew of public, private, and Tribal technical specialists also contributed to the effort. Under the coordination of the UNF and Umatilla Basin Watershed Council, nearly 140 individuals from partner agencies and organizations participated in a five-day fish rescue and relocation project and Tribal youth were surveyed and installed, more than 40,000 native plants which were propagated for the project at the CTUIR Native Plant Nursery. Almost as dizzying

is the array of financial and in-kind contributors to the \$3.5 million project, including the CTUIR and a Forest Service Challenge Cost Share Agreement that allowed the CTUIR to undertake construction on the reach running through the UNF.

This project managed to create a highly-successful working partnership in a challenging environment across jurisdictional boundaries, funding streams, and ownership interests that is truly staggering. And all of that hard work has paid off as Mike and his partners are moving forward with ambitions for phase two – another 1 and ½ miles of restoration! At the end of the day, this project serves as a model of the outstanding work that can be accomplished with committed partners and thoughtful planning and engagement. Rise to the future indeed! Continued on page 8.

“The Meacham Creek Project was a highly technical and ambitious project to restore floodplain and riverine processes over 1.1 miles of stream that sustain First Foods for CTUIR. Without the cooperation of all partners, technical staff and community volunteers this project would not have been successful in attaining our project goals.” – Mike Lambert



Log habitat structure and cottonwood island on USFS land within the restored Meacham Creek natural channel. USFS, October 2011



Cimarron National Grassland

Thanks to all partners who contribute to the amazing work being done in the field!



Forest Service Stock Photo

Tribal Lands Day

The Forest Service Offices of Conservation Education and Tribal Relations are working with the National Environmental Education Foundation (NEEF) to invite Tribal communities to highlight their work in conservation areas that foster healthy communities and encourage land stewardship by taking part in Tribal Lands Day on September 29th, 2012.

Any community activity or land stewardship project that benefits Tribal lands can be registered as a Tribal Lands Day event by emailing triballandsday@neefusa.org.

All volunteer events will be highlighted on the National Environmental Education Foundation (NEEF) website. Successful events will also serve as leading examples for other Tribes who wish to enhance local stewardship within their own communities. Examples of projects include habitat restoration, trash or invasive plant removal, trail maintenance, gardening or the collection of environmental data. Projects can also focus on the revitalization of cultural or historic sites. Events can also be educational or recreational

like organized hikes, educational talks or festivals that honor the land through the celebration of cultural heritage kits to help promote events, and access to free educational webinars.

For more information, visit please visit www.neefusa.org/triballandsday or contact Ericka Luna at eluna@fs.fed.us or Sue Cummings at scummings@fs.fed.us.



Photo Courtesy of the National Environmental Education Foundation

Continued...

Ceremonial Stone Structures and Landscapes

In the Eastern Region, the Forest Service is engaged in collaboration and consultation with USET and the Narragansett Tribe of Indians, the Stockbridge-Munsee Band of Mohican Indians, the Aroostook

Band of Micmacs, and several state-recognized groups of Abenaki Indians to develop appropriate protocols for the non-invasive investigation of these stone features.

For additional information, please contact Alan Dorian at adorian@fs.fed.us or Larry Heady at lheady@fs.fed.us.

Historic Impacts, Historic Solutions on Meacham Creek

Thanks to Tracii Hickman and Mike Lambert for their contributions to this article. For more information about this project, you can find Mike Lambert at

mikelambert@ctuir.org or 541.429.7283. For additional project background, you can reach Tracii Hickman, ESA Consultation Biologist

on the Umatilla National Forest at thickman@usda.gov or (541) 278-3819.

Consultation Corner

USDA Forest Service
Tribal Relations Consultation Schedules
Updated March 29 2012

Table 1- Schedule of Current and Upcoming Tribal Consultation

Consultation Topic	Start Date	End Date
Wilderness Management – Manual Revision	Delayed	To Be Determined
Small Business Timber Sale Set-Aside Program – Proposed Policy Directive	February 1, 2012	May 31, 2012
Bighorn Sheep Management Directive	To Be Determined	To Be Determined
Objection Process Consultation, Revision of Regulations at 36 CFR 218	April 2, 2012	July 31, 2012
Threatened and Endangered Species (TES) Animal and Plant Habitat Biodiversity Guidance	To Be Determined	To Be Determined
Invasive Species Management - Handbook Revision	To Be Determined	To Be Determined
FSM 2309.13 Recreation Site Handbook	To Be Determined	To Be Determined
Groundwater Resource Management (Draft of new manual – FSM 2560)	To Be Determined	To Be Determined
Planning Rule Directives	To Be Determined	To Be Determined

Table 2 - Completed Tribal Consultation

Consultation Topic	Start Date	End Date
Farm Bill Section 8105 (Forest Products for Traditional and Cultural Uses) – Regulation and Directive Revision	April 20, 2010	September 1, 2010
Administrative Appeal Rule – 36 CFR 214	August 11, 2010	January 10, 2011
Wind Energy - Directive	August 25, 2010	February 1, 2011
Planning Rule – Pre-publication of Draft Proposed Rule	September 23, 2010	December 13, 2010
Community Forest and Open Space Conservation Program	September 30, 2010	February 20, 2011
Farm Bill Section 8103 (Reburial) - Manual Revision	October 5, 2010	May 31, 2011
Planning Rule – Post-publication of Proposed Rule	December 13, 2010	March 22, 2011
Paleontological Resources Preservation	March 7, 2011	July 13, 2011
Management of National Forest System Surface Resources with Non-Federal Mineral Estates	March 7, 2011	July 13, 2011
National Aerial Application of Fire Retardant Environmental Impact Statement	April 25, 2011	August 25, 2011
National Environmental Policy Act Categorical Exclusions Supporting Landscape Restoration	May 6, 2011	August 31, 2011
Burned Area Emergency Response - Manual Revision	May 24, 2011	October 7, 2011
Planning Rule (120 days prior to estimated date of Final Rule)	July 14, 2011	November 14, 2011
Sacred Sites (Draft Report to the Secretary of Agriculture)	July 2011	November 2011



USDA FOREST SERVICE

Office of Tribal Relations
201 14th Street, SW Yates Building
2nd Floor Central West Wing
Washington DC
20250

Phone: 202-205-1514
Fax: 202-205-1773

<http://www.fs.fed.us/spf/tribalrelations/index.shtml>

The OTR supports meaningful and significant collaboration and consultation with Tribes across all program areas. The OTR is committed to help increase opportunities for Tribes to benefit from the Forest Service programs and to help the Forest Service benefit from input from Tribes, in support of Tribal Sovereignty, self-governance, and self-determination, as well as Forest Service goals such as adaptation and mitigation of climate change. The OTR is initializing and institutionalizing relationships with internal and external partners, working closely with other staffs to ensure Tribal concerns and opportunities are addressed in new policies, and developing implementation processes for new authorities.

Editor's Note

Dear Readers,

Thank you for your continued interest in the Forest Service Office of Tribal Relations. The emerging theme in our 2012 spring edition is work, and the information in this edition truly showcases some of the amazing work being done throughout the Forest Service in partnership with Indian Country.

OTR appreciates everyone who helped write, edit, and provided pictures for this newsletter. I have truly enjoyed working on the OTR Newsletter and hope that it continues to help improve communication with our partners and gains readership. Please contact us with your story ideas or suggestions on how we can improve the newsletter.

I can be reached by email at elluna@fs.fed.us or and phone at 202-306-1649 or (202) 205-0980.

We look forward to working with all of you as we strive to help build long-term collaborative partnerships with Tribes.

Sincerely,

Ericka





USDA Forest Service

Research & Development

Science

Tribal Research Update

Advancing partnerships to redeem trust responsibilities, serve the public, and learn about the land

Background:

Forest Service lands both contain trust resources, and border with Tribal reserved lands. Through treaty, legislation and Executive order, the agency has responsibility to maintain government-to-government relationships with Tribes, consult on actions that have Tribal implications, and work cooperatively to manage Tribal resources.

As historically disadvantaged communities, and as communities that are often directly tied to their local natural resources, investments in working with Tribes can help revitalize rural America, reduce poverty, and facilitate environmental justice. Engaging with tribal groups can also leverage the benefits of tapping into the diverse cultural experiences and backgrounds of Tribal members, enabling the Agency to better serve the citizens of our culturally diverse nation.

Tribes have centuries of locally-relevant experience managing natural resources, and offer a great opportunity to better understand the management of complex ecosystems, on the ground, for the benefit of Tribes and society as a whole. Traditional Ecological Knowledge may provide new insights into how ecosystems respond to human interventions and changing climate conditions, and suggest new strategies to manage forests and grasslands for a variety of economic services, cultural uses, and environmental benefits.

Current Activities:

- ◆ Engagement with the Intertribal Timber Council sub-committee on research.
- ◆ Cooperative research on various fish & wildlife, wildland fire, and forest health issues.
- ◆ A coordinated All-Station Climate Change and Tribes project, to better understand Tribal research needs as well as learn from Tribal observations and experiences related to managing under changing climate conditions.
- ◆ Establishment of regional Scientist-Manager networks in the Pacific Northwest, Southwest, and Southern regions focused on meeting tribal resource manager needs for responding to climate change.
- ◆ Seed and nursery partnerships to develop planting stock of ecologically resilient and culturally important plant and tree species.
- ◆ Numerous activities focused on engaging with Tribal youth, including school programs, environmental education programs, participation in community monitoring projects, mentor and internship programs, and visiting scholars/liaisons with the 1994 Land Grant Tribal Colleges.

Contact:

Chris Farley, National Climate Change Specialist,
cfarley@fs.fed.us

