



OFFICE of TRIBAL
RELATIONS
U.S. FOREST SERVICE
TRIBAL RELATIONS PROGRAM

Tribal Relations News

Director's Welcome

Nelson Mandela once said, "Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world." Indeed, the more we learn the more we understand the larger world around us and the more we can influence positive change and deeper understanding. The Forest Service is rooted in education, working with young people and communities since its inception 115 years ago. This newsletter highlights the Forest Service and Tribes partnering together to share knowledge.

First, we acknowledge the Tribal Forest Protection Act of 2004 and how the Forest Service and the Bureau of Land Management continue to work with federally recognized tribes and the Intertribal Timber Council to restore forested lands. Government to government relationships like this one and others were discussed at the annual To Bridge a Gap meeting, which I attended this past spring.

Educating Native youth has been a major topic throughout this year. Inspired by the White House Generation Indigenous initiative, the Forest Service has engaged in several events to improve the lives of Native youth through learning and leadership opportunities. The theme of youth and leadership intersects with the need for increasing and sharing knowledge across generations. Both themes are key to tribal communities and relate strongly to the whys and hows of the Forest Service's work with Tribes.

We highlight culture camps, the White House Tribal Youth Gathering, and the Inter-Tribal Youth Climate Leadership Congress and how they brought together thousands of driven Native youth. Read on and be inspired to contribute in your own way. As Sitting Bull said, "Let us put our minds together and see what life we can make for our children."

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- Fred Clark, Director
Office of Tribal Relations

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Hundreds of students listen during a plenary session at the United National Indian Tribal Youth (UNITY) conference, held in Washington, DC during the second week of July. Photo by Yolynda Begay/USFS.

Getting to Know: Clarence Smith

Cooperative Forestry in the Washington Office recently brought on intern **Clarence Smith** to help create a Tribal communication plan and marketing strategy for the Community Forest Program. The program is seeking to increase the number of Indian Tribes and Tribal entities participating in the program and is excited to work with Clarence on this project during his 12-week internship.



Photo courtesy of Clarence Smith.

He focused his research on measuring the economic value of Native American symbolism and certification through the creation of a hypnotical wood product (gift box) and how Indian Tribes and Tribal entrepreneurs can potentially find the target market in both domestic and international arenas.

Clarence presented his research during the Intertribal Timber Council 38th Annual National Indian Timber Symposium in Worley, Idaho, in 2014, and again at the American Indian Science and Engineering Societies annual conference this year in Florida. He first place in the graduate poster student presentation and second place at the most recent Council symposium in Oregon.

Clarence heard the internship opportunity through Mobilize Green, a non-profit organization that focuses on jumpstarting green careers for students and recent graduates. Seeing this as a way to get involved with Tribal natural resource issues and get connected with Tribal representatives, Clarence eagerly jumped at this opportunity. "I am excited to work in the Forest Service Washington Office, especially right after graduating. This is the heart of policy making and a great place to be to make positive change for Indian Country," Clarence said.

Being a positive Native American male role model is very important to Clarence, especially as a proud father of two daughters. He hopes to soon secure a government job that will allow him to work on Native American affairs and policy.

Clarence, a member of the Blackfeet Nation, was born and raised in Browning, Montana. Inspired by his grandmother's simple yet powerful message, "Go son, Get your education," Clarence left the reservation and pursued education with the goal of bridging the gap between western and traditional knowledge.

First in his immediate family to finish high school, he graduated from college at Ft. Lewis College in Durango, Colorado, with degrees in international business and international relations. But he did not stop there. Just a few weeks ago, Clarence earned his master's degree from the University of Washington's School of Environmental and Forest Science.

Getting to Know: Jennifer “Jen” Youngblood

Natural Resource Specialist Dr. **Jennifer “Jen” Youngblood** recently joined the Northeastern Area State and Private Forestry staff as liaison to the College of Menominee Nation. The [College of Menominee Nation](#) is an accredited Land Grant institution that serves American Indian students from many different tribes. In partnership, the Forest Service and [Center for First Americans Forestlands](#) at the college synthesize sustainable best practices of forest ecology, wood utilization, and Native American traditional knowledge for use by tribes and private landowners.

Dr. Youngblood descended from Mvskoke (say Muscogee) Creek Nation on her Mother’s side. She was born in California and grew up by the Colorado River Indian Tribes (CRIT) Reservation, which spans the river and has land in Arizona (La Paz Country) and California (San Bernardino). She brings to this position over 30 years of experience developing and managing programs from health care to environmental programs, and over 10 years working specifically in tribal environmental programs.

Jen’s primary focus has been working with tribal environmental professionals and Federal agencies. She has worked with the U.S. Department of the Interior in Alaska analyzing the impacts of offshore oil and gas development on Alaska Native communities. She has also worked as a senior tribal policy analyst and technical consultant for the National Tribal Air Association and the National Tribal Toxics Council, along with other tribal environmental and policy organizations.



Photo courtesy of Jen Youngblood.

Before she began tribal relations work, Jen had a career in nursing, forensics, and law enforcement as deputy medical examiner with the Waukesha County (Wisconsin) Medical Examiner’s Office and as part-time patrol officer with various local agencies. She holds a Doctorate in Jurisprudence from Taft University Law School in California; a Masters in Adult Education and a Bachelor of Science in Environmental Science and Physical Geography from Carroll University in Wisconsin; and an Associate Degree in Registered Nursing from Victor Valley College in California.

After having been outside of tribal work for awhile, Jen is ecstatic to be back. “Tribal work is close to my heart and coming to the Forest Service is like a breath of fresh air! I work with a positive group of people who are passionate about their work—it’s very inspiring and exciting!”

Having grown up in the desert heat, she loves winter and all things snow, including winter sports, and frequently travels to Alaska.

Welcome to the Forest Service, Jen!

Closing the TFPA Gap with Knowledge

By Kathryn Sosbe, Office of Communications, Washington Office



Santa Clara Pueblo Governor J. Michael Chavarria looks over a map during a discussion of Tribal Forest Protection Act projects. The Santa Fe National Forest is working with the Santa Clara and Jemez Pueblos on developing a priority list of risk areas. (U.S. Forest Service)

Nature knows no boundaries. Fire, disease, drought or any other natural or manmade disaster has the potential of destruction outside of the boundaries in which they began. So it went in 2003 when a devastating wildfire leapt from public lands onto nearby tribal lands, leaving destruction in its path.

A few years later, Congress passed the Tribal Forest Protection Act of 2004 to strengthen U.S. Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management agency relationships with federally recognized tribes and to restore forested lands. The act authorizes the Secretaries of

Agriculture and Interior to enter into contracts and agreements with tribes to carry out certain projects on those agency lands that will reduce threats to adjacent or bordering tribal lands.

“We had the act, a plan to implement the act and the desire to strengthen partnerships and bridge gaps,” said Fred Clark, director of the national Office of Tribal Relations for the Forest Service. “But the act itself did not spur the action we had anticipated, so we needed to find out why.”

In the eight years following the passage of the Tribal Forest Protection Act, the Forest Service identified 11 proposals accepted by the agency, of which only six were successfully implemented. So the Forest Service and the Bureau of Indian Affairs turned to the Intertribal Timber Council to find out answers that could help make the act more successful for the agency.

The council made their finding known in the April 2013 report [“Fulfilling the Promise of The Tribal Forest Protection Act of 2004.”](#) Using surveys, interviews and site visits to Indian reservations and national forests, the Timber Council found that understanding of the Act varies between Tribes, the Forest Service and the Bureau of Indian Affairs, that the level of understanding of government-to-government work varies throughout the Forest Service, and that a frequent turnover in leadership and staff hamper long-term, collaborative relationships at the local level. The Council also found unwillingness by some Tribal members to engage with the agency due to a lack of understanding and/or trust.

The agency supported two Tribal Forest Protection Act training events in the springs of 2015 in Spokane, Washington, and Albuquerque, New Mexico.

Meeting Helps Tribes, Agency Strengthen Partnerships

By Sarah Farmer, Southern Research Station

Tribal Nations and the Forest Service recently met at the 14th annual To Bridge a Gap meeting to share scientific research and traditional ecological knowledge, while discussing strategies for managing cultural and natural resources in the National Forests. The meeting, March 30 – April 2, was hosted by the Eastern Shawnee Tribe and the Ouachita and Ozark National Forests.

“The meeting helps strengthen government to government relationships between the Forest Service and federally recognized tribal governments,” says Serra Hoagland, a biological scientist with the Forest Service Southern Research Station. “The management of cultural and natural resources is extremely important not only to the Forest Service, but also to many Tribes that were removed from their homelands.”

All 39 federally recognized Oklahoma Tribes attended the meeting, as well as many Tribes from other states. Government agencies, academic institutions, and private industry also attended. “Successful partnerships often depend on trusting relationships,” says Hoagland. “The meeting provides a venue for Tribes to develop bonds of trust and communication and establish practical ways of restoring ecosystems while seeking to benefit all participants.”

The meeting also provides Forest Service scientists and managers the opportunity to learn about traditional ecological knowledge, which has been developed by Tribes over many generations. Tribal leaders and members led sessions on sustainability, cultural resources, partnership successes, and other topics. Forest Service botanist Jan Schultz shared information about the Zaagkii Project, a tribal partnership that restores native pollinator-friendly plant communities, and other Forest Service scientists discussed a range of natural resource management and partnership successes.



To Bridge a Gap attendees participate in a stomp dance. Photo courtesy of Jim Caldwell/USFS.

“These conferences have been highly collaborative since 2002, when they first began,” says Hoagland, who recently coauthored a commentary on the history and significance of the meeting. The commentary was [published in the *Journal of Forestry*](#).

“Traditional ecological knowledge can provide insights into how our nation’s forest and grasslands respond to human interventions and changing climates,” says Hoagland. Integrating traditional ecological knowledge and western science could help both the Forest Service and Tribes to become more environmentally sustainable, and the meeting is becoming a model for collaboration that is being adopted in other parts of the country.

Editor’s Note: This originally appeared in the Southern Research Station’s Compass Live.

Cross Cultural Camp Helps Plant Trees, Knowledge

By Stephen Archibald, Arthur Carhart National Wilderness Training Center

The 3rd Annual Bitterroot Culture Camp brought together 21 middle school students from the Flathead Reservation and the Bitterroot Valley of Montana, which also is the ancestral homeland of the Bitterroot Salish.

For 5 days and 4 nights the students experienced or learned history, culture, outdoor skills, and giving service at Traveler's Rest State Park, an ancient gathering place for diverse people and cultures, and the Forest Service's Trapper Creek Job Corp on the Bitterroot National Forest.



Tim Ryan, a member of the Salish Tribe, teaches students attending the Bitterroot Culture Camp how to make traditional items. (U.S. Forest Service)

In addition to the forest, camp planners included the Arthur Carhart National Wilderness Training Center, the Salish/Pend-d'Oreille Culture Committee, People's Center, Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes, Forest Service's Northern Region, and the Bitter Root Resource Conservation and Development Area Inc. The Kicking Horse and Trapper Creek Job Corps were instrumental in making the camp work.

Besides presentations from Elders and agency personnel, one highlight was the *Fales Flat Culturally Peeled Trees Identification Project*: Working with Mary Williams, Bitterroot National Forest, and Trapper Creek Job Corps student leaders, camp participants initiated an assessment of 200 culturally peeled trees in a traditional gathering area. Teams of students identified each tree's GPS location, took multiple photographs, and provided written descriptions/measurements.

Another highlight were the traditional drummers and singers from the Flathead Reservation for the Wilderness Honor. Tony Incashola, director of the Salish/Pend-d'Oreille Culture Committee, lead others to honor wild places as well as the as Wilderness Heroes from the Flathead Reservation and western Montana.

A Culture Camp Replication Guide will be available from the Carhart Center this fall.

Greatness Ahead, Our Natural Resources and Tribal Youth — #WHTYG

By Bryan Rice, Director of Forest Management, Washington Office

A historic day was marked on July 9, 2015 as nearly one thousand tribal youth representing over 230 different Tribes from across the country converged on the national capitol for the White House Tribal Youth Gathering (#WHTYG). The event is part of the [Generation Indigenous Initiative](#) (#GenI), focused on improving the lives of Native youth through new investments and increased engagement. Taking a culturally appropriate approach to ensure all young Native people can reach their full potential, the event provided a forum for the youth to listen, lead and learn. Federal executives from across government were invited to engage in conversations, panels, and speaking events to better connect the next generation to those in national seats of responsibility.

Federal representatives in attendance included, the Department of the Interior's Assistant Secretary of Indian Affairs, Kevin Washburn and United States Department of Agriculture's Undersecretary of Natural Resources and Environment, Robert Bonnie. The event was opened by DOI Secretary, Sally Jewell, with a much anticipated keynote address from the First Lady, Michelle Obama. The address included recognition of the challenges these young people face in their tribal communities and commendation for the many innovate projects these youth have engaged in to overcome the challenges. The First Lady's remarks to the packed plenary session concluded with her and President Obama's support, "We have your back."

I had the privilege of being invited, along with several of my colleagues, to host a panel discussion focusing on "Our Natural Resources and Climate Change." The panel represented a diverse set of leaders in natural resources including: USDA Forest Service; White House Council on Environmental Quality; White House Office of Intergovernmental Affairs; Department of Justice Indian Rights Office; and USDA Undersecretary of Natural Resources and Environment, Robert Bonnie, who joined the discussion as a surprise guest.

Prior to our panel discussion, the youth gathered to caucus around several topics and prepare for meeting with the panelists. After brief panel introductions, the different caucuses in the room sprang to life with comments, questions and incredibly thoughtful and genuine discussion topics: "I am concerned regarding the litter that I see on trails and in the forest near my home"; "We are a fishing people and climate change is affecting us"; "I am concerned that our leaders do not understand or represent our intentions and wishes." While many of the comments could be attributed to a tribal member and geographic area in the country, the veins of connection were present with every tribal member in the room, seen through nods of agreement and heard through other words of affirmation.

The level of discussion and depth of knowledge from the Tribal youth was absolutely impressive. Their ability to identify issues and analyze the tradeoffs, in what appeared to be an effortless manner on a broad range of issues, is indicative of our future leaders who will make Indian Country proud. This event inspired me to continue to work to prepare and support these Native youth who will be leading us in the future. #WHTYG #GenI



Inter-Tribal Youth Climate Leadership Congress

From the Alaska Regional Office.

Recently, 90 Alaska Native, American Indian, and Native Hawaiian high school students came together at the [National Conservation Training Center](#) in Shepherdstown, West Virginia for a week of intensive education and peer-to-peer training about the impact of climate change on tribal communities. The event was organized by the Inter-Tribal Youth Climate Leaders Congress (#NativeCCC) and supported by a partnership between the [Forest Service](#), the Department of Interior's [Bureau of Indian Affairs](#), [U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service](#), the [National Park Service](#), and the [U.S. Geological Survey](#).

Alaska Native student Sierra Ezrre, from Juneau, Alaska and her mentor and culture keeper Carrie Sykes, attended the congress. Adelaide “Di” Johnson, Forest Service hydrologist in on the Juneau Ranger District, interviewed Sierra about her experience at the congress.

How was your experience at Native CCC?

I just wanted to give thanks for this amazing opportunity to travel to Shepherdstown, WV and attend the Inter-Tribal Youth Climate Change Leadership Congress (Native CCC). The week I spent back east was by far, the best week of my entire life.

It was thought-provoking to see that climate change was affecting every represented Tribe at the Native CCC.

Every single [community] had an issue due to climate change. It was sad to see that people on some reservations do not even have clean drinking water because the water has been contaminated by oil companies. Native people, to try to stop further contamination, sat along the road to stop the trucks from going by. The power of the people with their caring for the land could stop big industry. This is amazing.

It was great to be around people who were raised and taught similarly to how I was. Growing up, the number one rule I was taught was respect. It seemed that all of the other Tribes had similar values. Everyone was respectful to the land, one another, and all of the adults.

What was most inspiring?

Like me, the 100 or so students at the Native CCC were able to listen and respect when a person was talking and sharing ideas. Students maintained silence and were attentive. I wish this level of respect was practiced everywhere. If this could happen, the world would be a better place.

Everyone had so much faith in each other. I felt so empowered when we all came together. I felt that we could all change the world because we were all so motivated to do so. We know how our traditional ways are being affected due to climate change. We all want to keep our traditional ways and this can only happen if we come together for this common cause. The future belongs to us and we are the ones who can change what is happening.



Sierra Ezrre, Tlingit high school student from Juneau, Alaska, and Carrie Sykes, Haida Cultural Educator from Kasaan, Alaska, pictured here with USDA Deputy Under Secretary, Arthur “Butch” Blazer, participated in the Inter-Tribal Youth Climate Leadership Congress (#NativeCCC). Photo: Alejandro Morales/USFWS.

More Native Kids in the Woods

By Mary McCorvie, Shawnee National Forest



Brianna Barnes, Mackenzie Sheppard and Mykal Brisbois participate in a special program on the Shawnee National Forest. (U.S. Forest Service)

“Hey, I got another piece of glass!” Brianna Barnes breathed as Mykal Brisbois and Mackenzie Sheppard continued to push the southern Illinois clay through the screen while others scraped the bottom of the excavation unit with their trowels, scraping against sandstone and other debris left by the sites past inhabitants.

These were the sounds heard in the Shawnee National Forest as a group of tribal youth from the Eastern Shawnee and Shawnee Tribes and their chaperones explored the region and learned about the lands their ancestors once walked upon. Forest Service archaeologists Heather Carey and Mary McCorvie guided the students along the way, walking down an original trail segment of the Cherokee Trail of Tears in Union County, Illinois, and teaching the basics of archaeological excavation.

The group was able to travel to southern Illinois from their homes scattered around northeastern Oklahoma through a More Kids in the Woods grant from the Forest Service’s Eastern Region. Building on the agency’s traditions of conservation education, the Shawnee National Forest worked with two resources at Southern Illinois University, the Center for Archaeological Investigations and Touch of Nature Environmental Center, to offer an exceptional outdoors education for these tribal youth and to actively learn about the area’s history and the rich environment they hiked through daily. Touch of Nature staffer Alex Halbrook provided a number of education and recreation activities for the students during their off hours, when they were not digging.

Toward that aim, after participating in the archaeological excavation, the Shawnee youth canoed the Cache and learned about the area’s special ecology, and hiked to the top of Millstone Bluff to learn about the prehistory of southern Illinois and the area’s earliest inhabitants. Millstone Bluff is an interpreted archaeological site containing the un-plowed remains of a village surrounding a plaza area, a looted stone box cemetery, rock art and a Late Woodland stone fort. The site was occupied from ca. 400 to 900 AD and again from 1250-1500 AD. The rock art at the site is some of the most detailed and complete of its kind in the eastern United States.

The rock art at Millstone Bluff is a prehistoric depiction of the Mississippian-era cosmology; it is a self-description of where the Millstone peoples saw themselves within their own universe.

The week-long visits to the Shawnee Forest are an opportunity for the students to learn about, explore and form a connection with the wild areas their ancestors once walked on. This they did by exploring the forest beneath their feet through archaeology, touching the trees, canoeing the Cache and connecting with their own history.

Regional Round Robin

Rocky Mountain Region

The annual Rainbow Family Gathering was held near the Black Hills National Forest during the first weekend of July. The event, which is hosted in a different National Forest every year, drew a smaller crowd than usual with roughly 1,700 people in attendance. The Forest Service is working with community members to ensure the site is cleaned up in next couple of weeks.

Intermountain Region

Deputy Under Secretary Arthur “Butch” Blazer visited the Intermountain Region in June and met with the Shoshone Bannock Tribal Business Council in Fort Hall, ID, tribal representatives from Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes, and Blackfoot leaders to discuss tribal matters.

Eastern Region

The Eastern Region continues to consult with removed Oklahoma tribes in helping them connect to their ancestral lands on the Mark Twain National Forest and other southern tier National Forests. The Shawnee National Forest has recently hosted “Generation-Indigenous” conservation education programming specifically for the youth of the Absentee-Shawnee, Eastern Shawnee, and Shawnee Tribes.

The Osage Tribe recently stepped up to take the lead on repatriation of the Mark Twain’s CUI NAGPRA inventory. This was done with the consensus of six other Tribes with ancestral ties to the same geographic area.

Alaska Region

Two new employees, Carla Casulucan and Lydia Mills, traveled with Lillian Petershoare to Welch, Minnesota to attend the annual SAIGE (Society of American Indian Government Employees) conference held at the Treasure Island Hotel & Casino, owned by the Prairie Island Indian Community. Carla and Lydia, both Alaskan Native Tlingit, enjoyed the conference which focused on “Growing Native Leaders: Enhancing Our Sever Generations.”

Safety Corner

**Drink cool,
clean water
every 15-20
minutes to
ensure proper
hydration.**

*Don't wait until you
are thirsty to drink.*



USDA Forest Service
Tribal Relations Consultation Schedule
Updated January 7, 2015

Table 1 - Schedule of Current and Upcoming Tribal Consultation

Topic	Type	Start Date	End Date
Tribal Relations Directives	Manual and Handbook	June 6, 2013	Open until further notice
Community Forest Program - Proposed Rule	Manual	December 2014	To Be Determined
Bighorn Sheep Management Directives	Manual	To Be Determined	To Be Determined
Invasive Species Management Directives	Handbook	To Be Determined	To Be Determined
Rangeland Management Directives	Manual and Handbook	To Be Determined	To Be Determined
Recreation Site - FSH 2309.13	Handbook	To Be Determined	To Be Determined
Ski Water Rights – FSH 2709.11	Handbook	To Be Determined	To Be Determined
Threatened and Endangered Species (TES) Animal and Plant Habitat Biodiversity Guidance Directives	Manual	To Be Determined	To Be Determined
Wilderness Management Directives	Manual	Delayed	To Be Determined

Table 2 - Completed Tribal 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
Small Business Timber Sale Set-Aside Program - Policy Directive	February 1, 2012	May 31, 2012
Objection Process Consultation, Revision of Regulations at 36 CFR 218	April 2, 2012	September 7, 2012
Planning Rule Directives	February 27, 2013	June 28, 2013
Paleontological Resources Preservation	May 23, 2013	July 22, 2013
Fire and Aviation Management Directives	June 6, 2013	October 6, 2013
Special Forest Products	June 6, 2013	October 6, 2013
Solar Energy Directives	December 4, 2013	April 4, 2014
Heritage Program Directive	December 4, 2013	April 4, 2014
Commercial Filming Interim Directive	December 4, 2013	April 4, 2014
National Forest System (NFS) Bundled Tribal Consultation	December 4, 2013	April 4, 2014
Research and Development's Tribal Engagement Roadmap	January 10, 2014	May 11, 2014
Groundwater Resource Management – FSM 2560	May 6, 2014	October 3, 2014

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Editor's Note:



I would like to thank everyone for their valuable contributions to this newsletter, including those in the OTR.

I am on detail with the Office of Tribal Relations until October. Please feel free to contact me with any comments or future story suggestions for the October newsletter. I can be reached at (202) 697-1411 or mjvalteau@fs.fed.us.

Thank you.