



Inside this issue:

“Water As Medicine”

[Getting to Know Native FS Employee Cole Belongie](#) 2

[Honor & Respect For Indigenous Peoples Globally: FS Associate Chief Wagner Meets Leaders in Cameroon](#) 3

[Federal-Tribal Study Finds How To Reduce Emerald Ash Borer](#) 4

[Greenville Indian Rancheria & Agency Continue Cultural Forest Stewardship](#) 5

[White Mountain Apache Sawmill Reopens with a Focus on Safety & Quality](#) 6

[Caddo Heritage Crew Expands Work With FS & Agency Partners](#) 7

[The FS Helps Memorialize the Trail of Tears](#) 8

[R&D Review: Pondwatch- A Leech Lake Tribal College- FS Research Partnership](#) 9

[Water As Medicine: The Nez Perce Tribe is Honored for Restoring Watersheds with the FS](#) 10

[Safety Corner](#) 11

[Regional Round Robin](#) 12

[Consultation Corner](#) 13

[About us](#) 14



# Tribal Relations News

## Director’s Welcome

As someone hailing from a drought-stricken Southwest reservation ([Navajo](#)), I have always appreciated the importance of water. Many Tribes respect the value of the gift of water—in our article about the [Nez Perce’s](#) groundbreaking watershed/fisheries restoration work, a tribal member explains, “[We] have always treated water as a medicine because it nourishes the life of the earth, flushing poisons out of humans, other creatures, and the land.”

Tribes nationwide are collaborating with the Forest Service to preserve and improve this resource. Besides the Nez Perce tie, Pond Watch is a partnership between the [Forest Service Northern Research Station](#) and the [Leech Lake Tribal College Forest Resources Program](#). We also interview Cole Belongie, a [Lac Vieux Desert Band of Lake Superior Chippewa Indians](#) member who started his Forest Service career in fisheries and is now a Forest Service GIS/mapping specialist. Finally, we discuss a breakthrough in the fight against the emerald ash borer—a new study found that submerging ash logs in water can effectively control the pest’s emergence from infested black ash logs destined to be used in traditional basket making.

Water is also crucial in battling a common threat: fire. We showcase the continued success the [Greenville Indian Rancheria Fire Crew](#) is having partnering with California national forests.

Of course, many Tribes are tied to their environment in other ways, and continue to team up with the Forest Service to meet all of our needs. For example, the [Caddo Nation Heritage Crew](#) is expanding its work with the Forest Service and agency partners. In addition, the [Forest Service Forest Products Lab](#) assisted the [White Mountain Apache](#) sawmill to reopen.

Sadly, many Tribes were forcibly displaced from their ancestral environments during the Removal era. [Mark Twain National Forest’s](#) Tribal Liaison and [Lakota Sioux](#) tribal member Marla Striped-Face Collins recounts how she helped the Forest host the [Cherokee Nation’s](#) recent Remember the Removal Bike Ride to memorialize the Trail of Tears.

Forest Service Associate Chief Mary Wagner applauds these efforts, outlining a vision for future agency-tribal cooperation in her article. We foresee more creative thinking with our tribal partners to ensure our natural resources, including water, will continue to be our medicine.

-Estelle Bowman,  
Acting Director

*White Mountain Apache Tribe Veterans of Foreign Wars honor the Tribe’s reopened sawmill by raising the new flag at the “First Board” ceremony in 2014.*

Photo credit: Gary Cantrell



“Finding even small ways to incorporate my culture into my work is important...I focus on maintaining that connection to my tribal roots.”

## Getting to Know Cole Belongie

Boozhoo (hello) my name is Cole Belongie. I am a proud member of the [Lac Vieux Desert Band of Lake Superior Chippewa Indians](#). I grew up in Watersmeet and Ewen, Michigan for most of my childhood and early adult life. Both of these towns and the tribal reservation lands are located in the Western end of the Upper Peninsula of Michigan.

I began my Forest Service career as a temporary Creel Survey Technician on the [Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest](#) of Northern Wisconsin during a summer off from Northern Michigan University. Getting paid to ride around on my tribe’s historic homeland of Lac Vieux Desert Lake was the best summer job a kid could hope for. I spent my days engaging anglers, asking them about fishing on the lake and measuring the fish that they caught. Although I had grown up surrounded by National Forest lands and knew many people who worked for the Forest Service, it wasn’t until that summer that I actually thought about a career with the agency.

After completing my Bachelor of Science in Environmental Conservation, I started working as my tribe’s Environmental Officer. My duties included conducting water studies and environmental assessments on tribal lands and coordinating the walleye fish hatchery at the village grounds. I also partnered with the Ottawa National Forest on several projects, including the Lac Vieux Desert – L’Anse historical trail committee and on the Rainbow Family of Light Gathering impact assessment.

After leaving Lac Vieux Desert with my wife to pursue her career in Rochester, Minnesota, I decided to obtain my Master’s Degree in Geographic Information Systems, and was fortunate to secure a position in the Forest Service SCEP program on Michigan’s Hiawatha National Forest. With great mentoring and support from my colleagues, I completed my degree and converted to my current job as a GIS Specialist for Region 6 in Oregon, sitting at the [Siuslaw National Forest](#) Supervisor’s Office in Corvallis. My agency experience has afforded me wonderful opportunities. For example, I completed a 120-day detail in Southeast Alaska based out of Wrangell. I’ve had the chance to work out of the [National Interagency Fire Center](#) in Boise, Idaho. I’ve also been involved in some amazing cultural outreach experiences over the years, like teaching GPS and Geocaching at the 4-H International Summer Camp in Eugene, Oregon.

I owe the values I have today to the communities and people who raised me, including my Grandma, who is the oldest tribal elder, Rose Martin. I am honored to still help my tribe by helping my mother, who is the Tribal Historic Preservation Officer, with her various GIS questions. Although living on the West Coast makes it difficult to visit my family, I am fortunate that they send us packages of wild rice, maple butter and canned venison to bring me a little slice of home no matter where my Forest Service career takes me.



Cole Belongie in a western National Forest.

Photo credit: Kim Belongie

**Honor & Respect For Indigenous Peoples Globally:  
Forest Service Associate Chief Wagner Meets Leaders in Cameroon**

In May 2014, Forest Service Associate Chief Mary Wagner brought the American perspective to the MegaFlorestais Conference in Cameroon, speaking about the Forest Service’s experience engaging indigenous and community groups to promote conservation. The conference was co-hosted by the Cameroon Ministry of Forestry and Wildlife and the Rights and Resources Initiative, the latter of which supports local communities and indigenous peoples by promoting their rights to own, control, and benefit from natural resources, especially land and forests.

Associate Chief Wagner is no stranger to working with Indian tribes in the United States. She fondly remembers her experience while working for the agency in the Pacific Northwest of taking a spring trip with Umatilla tribal elders and youth, learning about the importance of traditional first foods. She also learned the value of building relationships in the community through maintaining the strong government to government relationship that the Forest Service enjoys with the Klamath Tribe. She explained that Forest Service line officers pass down connections to local tribes to new Forest Service staff, and that these relationships are essential, for though Forest Service staff change over time, Tribes have unique place connections as the original stewards of the land.



*Forest Service Associate Chief Mary Wagner (left) in Cameroon.*

*Photo credit: Megaflorestais Conference Synopsis*

In telling the American story, however, Associate Chief Wagner acknowledged that the road to federal-tribal collaboration has not been smooth. American settlers displaced tribes through treaties and laws such as the Homestead Act, and much of National Forest System land was originally tribal land. Although this history is difficult to overcome, she emphasized that the Forest Service respects the unique status of Indian tribes and treaty rights, noting that tribes have rights on over 3 million hectares of Forest Service land.

Associate Chief Wagner told her international colleagues about several key initiatives improving tribal relations today. First, five federal agencies signed a Memorandum of Understanding to improve the protection of, and access to Indian sacred sites. Second, pioneering partnerships have been formed through tribal involvement in the Forest Service Planning Rule, the Anchor Forest

pilot project, and tribal traditional knowledge-based research. Finally, the Forest Service is creating a culture of diversity and inclusion by building cultural competencies amongst employees. As she summarized, “The seeds of community-based collaboration have been sown.”

Associate Chief Wagner also foresees opportunities for working with Indian tribes through existing laws and programs: “Tribes and the Forest Service can be open and creative in addressing challenges across landscapes.” For example, she noted the tribal climate change flagship projects that each region will be working on this year.

With the Forest Service’s emphasis on a culture of inclusion leading to a stronger connection to the land, Indian tribes are uniquely situated to play a big role in the future of our nation’s forests.

*“Tribes and the Forest Service can be open and creative in addressing challenges across landscapes.”*

*-Associate Chief Mary Wagner*

## Federal-Tribal Study Finds How To Reduce Emerald Ash Borer

By Nate Siegert, Forest Service Entomologist

Black ash, also known as brown ash or basket ash, holds great cultural and spiritual significance to several Native American tribes in the U.S. and First Nations in Canada. For instance, Tribes pound ash logs into flattened layers that can be cut and woven into traditional baskets. Yet this tradition is threatened by the North American invasion of the emerald ash borer, an Asian beetle that feeds exclusively on ash. Although most infested logs remain suitable for basketry, some of the wood becomes degraded and unusable for basketry. Fortunately, a recently published Federal-tribal study finds that simply submerging ash logs in water can effectively stop the beetle's emergence from infested logs.

First detected in 2002 in Michigan, the emerald ash borer has killed millions of ash trees. The larvae do the damage, feeding under ash bark before they emerge as adult beetles in the spring. The larval feeding disrupts the movement of nutrients and water in the tree, killing otherwise healthy ash trees in three to five years. Before emerald ash borer adults emerge from the wood in the spring, however, the larvae first seal themselves off in a protective chamber in the outer sapwood or thick outer bark to complete development. As a result, emerald ash borer adults can readily emerge from logs cut within the previous 12 months.

Transporting black ash logs infested with emerald ash borer larvae that are still in their chambers risks spreading infestations to new areas. The risk is of particular concern when black ash logs harvested in infested areas must be transported to non-infested areas for processing. Unfortunately, traditional black ash harvesting areas may be some distance from tribal gatherer homes where the logs are stored and processed.

As outlined in [the Office of Tribal Relations Fall 2012 newsletter](#), the Forest Service has been working with the Wabanaki peoples of Maine and other state partners to slow the spread of the invasive insect. Following discussions with indigenous basket makers concerned about inadvertently transporting the beetle to new areas, federal, tribal and university stakeholders decided to collaborate on a study to assess emerald ash borer emergence from submerged black ash logs. Basket makers occasionally submerge ash logs to preserve them until they can be processed, but it was unknown how effective the strategy would be at minimizing the risk of beetle emergence, or how long the infested logs would have to remain under water.

Results from this first-of-its-kind study indicate that the beetle larvae in their protective chambers can survive complete submersion for extended periods of time (i.e., at least 6 weeks) and successfully emerge as adult beetles once logs are removed from water. Logs that were kept completely under water for at least 8 weeks, however, produced no live adult emerald ash borer— quite a breakthrough. The study will be published in an upcoming issue of *Agricultural and Forest Entomology*.



Black ash basket handcrafted by Richard Silliboy, a member of the [Aroostook Band of Micmacs](#).

The invasive emerald ash borer (inset) threatens all North American ash species, including black ash, a cultural keystone species to several Native American and First Nation tribes.

Photo credit: Nate Siegert

*“The invasive emerald ash borer threatens all North American ash species, including black ash, a cultural keystone species to several Native American and First Nation tribes.*”

## Greenville Indian Rancheria & Agency Continue Cultural Forest Stewardship

By Danny Manning, Greenville Indian Rancheria Fire & Fuels Crew Boss

The Office of Tribal Relations' Fall 2013 newsletter introduced California's Greenville Indian Rancheria Fire and Fuels Crew and its many innovative projects with the Forest Service. This edition, almost a year later, focuses on how this Forest Service-tribal partnership is working to improve forest health across landscapes.

### Heart K project

The 10-member Fire Crew is partnering with the Forest Service, the Feather River Land Trust, Susanville Indian Rancheria, Feather River College, and others on innovative forest health projects such as the Heart K Project. The 884-acre Heart K Ranch is a Maidu culturally and ecologically important land base.

Funded in part by a TogetherGreen Innovation Grant, the Fire crew contracted to complete burns on Heart K under the guidance of Maidu elders and the Forest Service. Project goals include enhancing forest health and conducting forest restoration using traditional ecological knowledge. That means, in addition to thinning and burning, the Heart K project work involves Native community volunteers, and explicit conversations about traditional knowledge between Native elders and partners from various public and private institutions.

### Maidu Stewardship Project

The 2100-acre Maidu Stewardship Project is the only National Stewardship Pilot Project awarded to a Tribe. Begun in 1998 by the Maidu Cultural and Development Group, the project emphasizes unique contracting and land management mechanisms to integrate traditional stewardship on culturally important Forest Service lands, including 1,500 acres on the Plumas National Forest and 600 acres on the Lassen National Forest.

Maidu traditional stewardship includes caring for and utilizing the many teas, culturally important plants, and tools found in the forest. When the crew thins, they also set aside materials for cultural use, including cedar poles for an annual *weda*, or spring dance. In 2011, the Fire Crew contracted with the Maidu Group to implement fuel reduction on the Plumas National Forest using traditional ecological knowledge. In 2013-2014, the Fire Crew invited the Mooretown Rancheria fire crew and the Susanville Indian Rancheria to partner too.

### Firefighting

The Greenville Fire Crew is a valuable federal resource in wildland firefighting. In 2013, they joined the Susanville Indian Rancheria Fire Crew on the Hough Complex Fire. The Greenville Fire Crew is helping the Susanville firefighters complete their Firefighter I task books and training.

The Tribes also partner with the Forest Service to train for fire season. In 2013, the agency offered crosscut and saw classes to both Fire Crews. Tribal fire crews, including Greenville and Susanville, are joining forces to form strike teams under the Bureau of Indian Affairs to work on lands managed by the Forest Service

The Maidu men on the Greenville Indian Rancheria's fire crew are committed to enhancing their traditional ecological knowledge, to educating Forest Service employees about the value of forest resources.

Tribes working together can accomplish more, employ more Native people, and establish a relationship with the Forest Service, other agencies, and landowners to work on traditional lands using traditional methods.



Rodney Lee, Greenville Fire Crew member, on the Genesee Wildland Urban Interface Collaborative Underburn on the Plumas National Forest.

Photo credit: Darrel Jury

“Tribes working together can accomplish more, employ more Native people, and establish a relationship with the Forest Service, other agencies, and landowners to work on traditional lands using traditional methods.”

## White Mountain Apache Sawmill Reopens With A Focus on Safety & Quality

By Patrick Rappold, Arizona State Forestry



White Mountain Apache Forest Industries carpenters (from left to right) Davin Yazzie and Augustine Bancroft (White Mountain Apache Tribe), Virgil Thorne (Navajo), and Brandon Cromwell (White Mountain Apache Tribe).

Photo credit: Gary Cantrell

Gary Cantrell of Oregon-based [Affiliated Timber Investment Conversion Advisors, Inc](#) coordinated these equipment upgrades and the new safety culture at the mill. Gary examined not only the sawing machines, but also how to improve workplace safety. Under Gary's leadership, sawmill employees have embraced the philosophy of putting safety first, followed by quality, and then production. This mindset is essential in creating a long term, sustainable forest product business which empowers employees to take ownership of their workplace.

Production at the sawmill began on February 23, 2014. Members of the White Mountain Apache Tribe Veterans of Foreign Affairs were on hand to commemorate the special event.

White Mountain Apache tribal members make up 95 percent of the 152 person workforce at the sawmill, with some [Navajo](#) tribal employees employed as well. The jobs are highly skilled and in-demand. For example, employees take saw sharpening and lumber inspection training, both essential to the profitability and productivity of the sawmill. Continuous training and safety enhancement courses complement these trainings.

The sawmill has increased employment and provided an outlet for the timber stand improvement activities being implemented by the White Mountain Apache tribal foresters. Production is exceeding goals and repeat orders have started to arrive. The Forest Service and Arizona State Forestry are pleased they provided technical assistance to the White Mountain Apache, and congratulates the Tribe on the sawmill's reopening.

Like many other forest product businesses, the tribally owned Fort Apache Timber Company in Whiteriver, Arizona saw a significant sales decrease in high-grade ponderosa pine lumber as the national housing market slowed in 2010. While this lackluster market forced tribal leaders to temporarily curtail operations at the sawmill, by identifying new markets and starting strategic partnerships, the mill reopened in February 2014. [White Mountain Apache](#) tribal leaders now see a bright future.

Before the mill's temporary closure in 2010, the [Forest Service Forest Products Laboratory's](#) Forest Products Marketing Unit in Madison, Wisconsin, along with the [Arizona State Forestry Division](#), had been providing technical expertise to tribal leaders. The federal and state partners assisted with log sorting and log merchandising, upgrading the small log mill, value-added manufacturing, and more.

Many of the Forest Service's and Arizona State's recommendations could not be implemented at that time, however, due to declining sales. Fortunately, as the lumber market started recovering, the [U.S. Department of the Treasury's New Markets Tax Credit Program](#) organized a large financial investment to implement the recommendations, ensure sawmill safety, and increase processing efficiencies. This infusion of capital enabled the newly named White Mountain Apache Forest Industries to replace several pieces of aging sawmill equipment with safer and more productive machines.

## Caddo Heritage Crew Expands Work with Forest Service & Agency Partners

**By Ernest Murray, Forest Service Public Affairs Officer**

The [Caddo-Lyndon B. Johnson National Grasslands](#) and the [National Wild Turkey Federation](#) are working on a project to improve upland game bird habitat on the 20,250-acre LBJ National Grassland northwest of the Dallas-Fort Worth area.

The LBJ National Grassland's native vegetation is a post oak and blackjack oak savannah with a tallgrass prairie. However, without prescribed burning and grazing, woody species such as Eastern red cedar have become established. The change in vegetation structure and composition has led to a change in wildlife species—specifically, the decline of the Northern bobwhite quail. The project focuses on removing Eastern red cedar and reintroducing fire to create the proper habitat for the quail.

The Forest Service trained a [Caddo Nation](#) crew to provide them with the necessary Heritage Paraprofessional certification to work with the agency, and thereafter established a Regional Master Participating Agreement and several project-specific Participating Agreements to enable the crew to conduct surveys throughout the region. Due to the large size of the LBJ project

*Caddo crew members Mr. William Quoetone (left) and Mr. Randy Cozad (right) screen for artifacts while Mr. Dylan Parker (center) excavates a test.*

*Photo credit: Scott Sills, Forest Service*

area, an archeological survey was necessary. The Caddo Nation of Oklahoma provided that Forest Service-certified Heritage Paraprofessional Crew to survey the area on behalf of the National Wild Turkey Federation, which had procured funds for the survey through a [Texas Parks & Wildlife's Upland Game Bird Stamp Funds grant](#).

The Caddo Nation paraprofessional crew surveyed from late April to early May. The Crew included Crew Chief William Quoetone, Brandon Roughface, Randy Cozard, Dylan Parker, Gerald Mason and Robert Tsotaddle Jr. The survey was led by Forest Service Archeologist Scott Sills under the direction of the Forest Assistant Heritage Program Manager Juanita Garcia.

This project marks a key expansion of tribal crews working with our partners, after years of work done in partnership with the Forest Service. The Southern Region is proud of its partnership with the Caddo Nation. As Brian Townsend, Tribal Liaison on the Davy Crockett National Forest, remarked,

“We hope to expand the scope of our partnership with the Caddo Nation Heritage crew to include Rx burning and other resource work on forests and grasslands.” He added, “There are lots of moving parts in these types of agreements and partnerships, but with the hard work of our agency's Heritage and Tribal Relations staff and the Tribe, it's easy.”



## The Forest Service Helps Memorialize the Trail of Tears

By Marla Striped-Face Collins, Mark Twain National Forest Tribal Liaison

“Meeting these riders was eye-opening- these are the kinds of events that make you get to know yourself better - Forest Supervisor Bill Nightingale

As a proud member of the [Lakota Sioux Nation](#), I strongly support tribal youth learning about their tribal heritage and identity. A powerful way to show my support is through participating in events memorializing tribal history. For example, in December, 2006, I spoke in support of the Big Foot Riders in memorial of the Wounded Knee Massacre in South Dakota, and gave out medicinal tea to runners of the [Fort Robinson Memorial Breakout Run](#) in January 2013. These memorial runs and rides pay tribute to our ancestors, boosting our tribal youth’s self-esteem and pride, which in turn heals tribal nations.

Several Tribes have ties to the [Mark Twain National Forest](#), including the [Cherokee Nation](#). During the Trail of Tears, they were forcibly removed from their Eastern homelands to Oklahoma, marching through the Forest on the way. When Nancy Feakes, Mark Twain Recreation Program Manager, told me about Cherokee bikers passing through Rolla, Missouri last year, I discovered that they were part of the Cherokee memorial Remember the Removal Bike Ride. I reached out to the Ride’s leader, Patrick Hill, to see how the Mark Twain might support the 2014 Ride that included 19 cyclists and 12 support team members trekking 950-miles through Georgia, Tennessee, Kentucky, Illinois, Missouri, Arkansas, and Oklahoma.

Nancy Feakes (Recreation Program Manager), Keri Hicks (Heritage Program Manager), and I located possible campsites and Trail of Tears points of interest which were previously unknown to the Ride, including the [Meramec Spring Park](#) campground. Because the ride would pass through the National Forest, we decided to host two potluck dinners, at the Potosi Ranger District and the Supervisor’s Office.

The Potosi Ranger District cooked a delicious spaghetti dinner for the bike riders and the support staff on June 11, 2014. Thank you to all the Forest Service staff who welcomed the Tribe- everyone learned a lot from our tribal guests. As Mark Twain National Forest Supervisor Bill Nightingale explained, “Meeting these riders was eye-opening--these are the kinds of events that make you get to know yourself better.”

“The ‘Remember the Removal’ ride not only commemorates this important event in our people’s history,” said Principal Chief Michell Hicks of the Eastern Band of Cherokee, “it is an opportunity for our youth to

learn more about our history.”

Riders made stops along the way accompanied by Jack Baker, Cherokee Nation tribal council member and a Trail of Tears historian. Check out the riders’ personal video diaries at <https://www.facebook.com/removal.ride>.

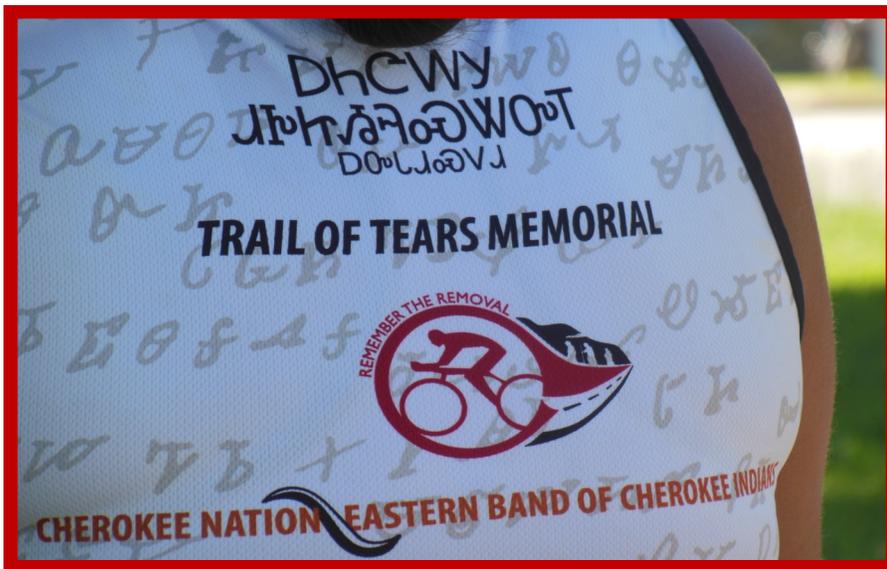


Photo credit:

Charlotte Ekker Wiggins, Forest Service

## Research and Development Review

### Pond Watch- A Leech Lake Tribal College-Forest Service Research Partnership

By Sue Eggert, FS Northern Research Station & Annette Drewes, Leech Lake Tribal College

Pete Maas grew up in the heart of the [Chippewa National Forest](#). “I’ve had a passion for learning about the outdoors since I was little,” he says. This led him to a two year Natural Resources Specialist Degree from Staples Technical College–Leech Lake Branch, and started him on a seven year journey monitoring water quality for the [Minnesota Chippewa Tribe](#).

The [Leech Lake](#) Reservation, where Pete spent his earliest years, extends across more than 850,000 acres in northern Minnesota. Over a third of that area includes three big lakes and the Mississippi Headwaters. Seventy-five percent of the Chippewa National Forest (CNF) lands lie within the borders of the Leech Lake Reservation. Here, in the midst of plentiful lakes, Pete spent hours swimming, catching fish, harvesting wild rice and growing his passion for water.

Twenty years after earning his first degree, Pete Maas returned to school to further his education and help educate others about the region’s freshwater resources. Since May 2013, he has participated in Pond Watch, a collaborative partnership between the [Forest Service’s Northern Research Station](#) and the [Leech Lake Tribal College](#) Forest Resources Program.

“The research we are doing is taking place in my backyard. I grew up here and want to learn more about these ponds and the life they support,” explains Pete.

Long-term physical monitoring of seasonal pond characteristics in these forests help us understand changes that may occur over time due to climatic disturbances. These ponds support communities of unique aquatic invertebrates, found only in seasonal ponds. Partnering with Leech Lake Tribal College students and faculty to study the organisms inhabiting these ponds extends our ability to understand these temporary pond ecosystems.

Pond Watch is in its second year of what is hoped to be a long-term collaboration monitoring shifts in biological communities and hydrology on the Chippewa National Forest. The project is also providing hands-on learning opportunities for Leech Lake Tribal College students interested in forest resources and STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Math) fields. Students participate in all phases of the research, including sample collection, invertebrate identification and measurement, data analysis, and results presentation.

Most recently, on May 20, 2014 Pete Maas and the authors presented project results at the 2014 Joint Aquatic Sciences Meeting in Portland, Oregon.



Above: Shiela Northbird, Tribal College student intern, and Annette Drewes collect an invertebrate sample in a seasonal pond on the Chippewa National Forest/Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe Reservation in May 2014.

-Photo credit: Annette Drewes

-Below: Pete Maas and Sue Eggert collect an invertebrate sample in a seasonal pond on the Chippewa National Forest/Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe Reservation in May 2014.

-Photo credit: Annette Drewes



## Water As Medicine: The Nez Perce Tribe is Honored for Restoring Watersheds with the Forest Service

**By Christine Bradbury, Tribal Liaison– Nez Perce-Clearwater & Payette National Forests**

“The tribes have always treated water as a medicine because it nourishes the life of the earth, flushing poisons out of humans, other creatures, and the land.”

-Levi Holt, Nez Perce Tribe

For thousands of years, the [Nez Perce Tribe](#) has occupied Idaho, Oregon, Washington, and Montana. After settlers moved westward and encroached on their lands, the Tribe entered into the Treaty of 1855 with the federal government. In that treaty, the Tribe reserved their rights to hunt, fish, gather and pasture on “open and unclaimed” lands, of which about 9 million acres are now Forest Service managed.

With this ancient connection to the land, the Nez Perce Tribe is passionate about assisting the agency in maintaining outstanding aquatic habitat. Levi Holt, a Nez Perce member, explains that “the tribes have always treated water as a medicine because it nourishes the life of the earth, flushing poisons out of humans, other creatures, and the land. We know that to be productive, water must be kept clean. When water is kept cold and clean, it takes care of the salmon.” This sentiment is also reflected in the Forest Service’s mission “to sustain the health, diversity and productivity of the Nation’s forests and grasslands to meet the needs of present and future generations.”

Tribal communities whose spiritual and physical well-being were closely linked to salmon were shaken by the establishment of the Columbia and Snake Rivers’ hydropower system. A desire to improve their communities by improving salmon conditions prompted the Nez Perce Tribe to seek creative solutions.

It wasn’t long before the Tribe and the Forest Service realized far more could be accomplished to preserve and improve aquatic habitats together than apart. The agency began partnering with the Tribe’s Department of Fisheries Resource Management, which comprises seven divisions including Watershed, Research, Production, Harvest, Conservation Enforcement, and Administration. Together, the parties identify priorities, collect field data, fund projects from a variety of sources, and monitor project implementation. Benefits include improved resource conditions, local economies, threatened species recovery, conditions for the Tribe’s cultural practices, and increased harvest opportunities.

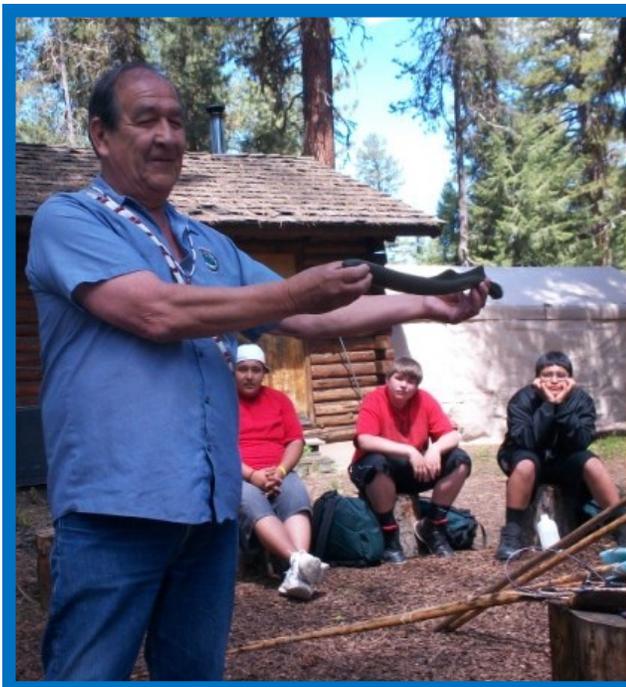
From 1997 through 2013, the FS-Nez Perce partnership has implemented over \$40 million in projects.

In 2013, the Tribe implemented a watershed restoration program of \$6,176,777 in partnership with Forests in Regions 1, 4, and 6. The Forest Service matched \$1,545,923.

In addition to these projects, the Tribe works with the Forest Service to implement research projects as well as operate weirs, acclimations facilities, and hatcheries on agency lands. In 2013, the Tribe produced and/or released on or adjacent to those public lands

*Nez Perce Elder and Fisheries employee Elmer Crow describes the lamprey and shares traditional fishing tools and techniques with Inter-Tribal Natural Resource Camp students. Mr. Crow passed away July 2013, but his legacy lives on.*

*Photo credit: Christine Bradbury*



*With [their] ancient connection to the land, the Nez Perce Tribe is passionate about assisting the agency in maintaining outstanding aquatic habitat.*

## **Water as Medicine article continued...**

2.2 million spring Chinook salmon, 100,000 summer Chinook salmon, 600,000 Coho salmon, and 750,000 fall Chinook salmon.

Some restoration projects, like road decommissioning, can be controversial. The Nez Perce Tribe tirelessly reaches out to diverse stakeholders to raise awareness of, and build support for, restoration efforts. With the Tribe's help on data collection, research, monitoring, field trips, and public presentations, negative public perception of restoration efforts have changed dramatically. Tribal staff also host and/or volunteer at dozens of [Forest Service Conservation Education](#) programs annually, raising awareness with area youth.

The Nez Perce Tribe demonstrates true leadership in the fisheries field, and was recognized for its accomplishments in a 2013 Forest Service Rise to the Future Award. Their passion and commitment in helping the Forest Service provide some of the highest quality fish habitat in the nation.

## **Safety Corner**

On June 17, 2014, the Forest Service Washington Office Safety and Health Committee hosted a "Get To Know Your Safety And Health Committee" Event. The Office of Tribal Relations' Pamela Williams represented the Office, and Forest Service staff were able to meet other staff representatives. Participants played fun and interactive safety games, including Safety Scrabble, and the Forest Service safety mascot, the Safety Bee, also buzzed in to say hello.

Participants who brought a wallet size photo of someone or something important that represents why they work safely received laminated badges with the information.



*Picture credit: Angela Stowes,  
Forest Service*

## Regional Round Robin

### Research & Development: Finalizing the Tribal Engagement Roadmap

Forest Service Research & Development is finalizing the [Tribal Engagement Roadmap](#) that outlines an agenda for its research staff regarding services to and engagement with American Indians, Alaskan Natives, Pacific Islanders, and other indigenous groups.

The 120-Day Tribal consultation period on the Roadmap recently concluded on May 11, 2014. [Forest Service Research Station Liaisons](#) conducted outreach to hundreds of tribes, both formally as part of tribal consultation and informally as part of the outreach effort. Though limited comments were received, those provided tended to express gratitude, support, and willingness to work together. Comments are currently being incorporated into the Roadmap and target publication is late 2014.

For additional information on the Roadmap, visit the website: <http://www.fs.fed.us/research/tribal-engagement/roadmap>



2006 Cultural Plant Propagation Center Grand Opening, Moencopi Day School in Tuba City, Arizona. This Center was developed through the Forest Service [National Reforestation, Nurseries, and Genetic Resources Program](#). The R&D Roadmap hopes to encourage more of this type of innovative collaboration with Tribes.

Photo credit: Jeremiah R. Pinto, Forest Service.

### Washington Office: 2012 National Tribal Relations Awards

The Office of Tribal Relations congratulates the recipients of the 2012 National Tribal Relations Awards:

- Lifetime Achievement: Alan Dorian, former Region 8 Tribal Relations Program Manager.
- Leadership Award: Larry Heady, Region 9 Tribal Relations Specialist and Special Assistant to the Regional Forester.
- Professional Excellence Award: Mary Rasmussen, Tribal Liaison for the Chequamegon-Nicolet, Hiawatha, and Ottawa National Forests.
- Partnerships: Chippewa National Forest/Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe.

With the exception of Alan's award, Region 9 Regional Forester Kathleen Atkinson and Deputy Regional Forester Mary Beth Borst officially gave out the awards during a Region 9 ceremony on May 7, 2014.

## Consultation Corner

### USDA Forest Service Tribal Relations Consultation Schedule Updated July 15, 2014

**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
Groundwater Resource Management – FSM 2560	Manual	May 6, 2014	September 3, 2014
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

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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.

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