



# US Forest Service Briefing Paper

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Date: July 22, 2009

**Topic:** Forestry and Wildland Fire Small Business Training

**Issue:** Developing capacity for economic opportunity in Tribal communities

**Background:** In September 2005, the USDA 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. Two modules were developed and delivered, *Forest Restoration Skills* and *Small Business Training*.

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. The SKC will be using and modifying the existing curriculum for site specific training. The training schedule will include five (5) training sessions on the Forest Restoration Skills. The *Forest Restoration Skills*; will focus on thinning, tree marking, planting, Wildland fire certification and crew development, chain saw certification, and forest restoration equipment. The OTR staff is working with Forest Service Grants and Agreements Office for an agreement with SKC for a total of five (5) trainings.

OTR staff is currently collaborating with Department of Interior (DOI), Bureau of Indian Affairs Division of Forestry and Wildland Fire Management, National Interagency Fire Center Training Division, Department of Agriculture (DOA) Rural Development, Indian Development Resources Solutions and Intertribal Timber Council.

The second module, *Small Business Training*, will emphasize basic business skills such as, organization, business, and legal structures, human resources management, contracting and bonding, for forest restoration contracting. The current schedule is to provide two (2) sessions on the Small Business Training. The site and dates have not been scheduled.

Each training will be followed by Indian Development Resources Solution (IDRS) working directly with the tribe and the Forest to identify areas on interest, issues and solutions. A Forest Service/ Tribal work plan will be developed from the meetings.

**Status:** On June 8-12, 2009 the Fremont-Winema, Office of Tribal Relations, Oregon State University, and the Klamath Tribes completed the first training that was designed specifically to assist the Klamath Tribes in developing a Native American small business that specialized in forestry and Wildland fire contract work for the Forest Service. The training was a four (4) day course that included basic forestry terminology, restoration principles and implementation, thinning and hazard fuel reduction, biomass applications, introduction to Wildland fire and contracting with the Forest Service. The week was a combination of classroom instruction and demonstration and field exercises that incorporate the use of applicable Forest Service standards and prescriptions as included in Forest Service contracts.

**Participants:** A total of thirty-two (32) Klamath Tribal Members attended the training. The skill level of the participants was varied; from forestry and field experience, heavy equipment operators, to no previous field experience.

### **Detailed Agenda:**

#### Day 1- Introduction to Forestry Terms and Measurements

The first day introduced the participants to basic forestry terminology and concepts. The curriculum included elevation, slope and aspect, basic soil science, insect and disease, plant succession, fire science, and fish and wildlife habitat, forest growth, tree attributes, tree stand dynamics, basic silviculture and implementation of a silvicultural prescription, basal area and forest measurements.

**Forest Measurement Demonstration:** A project demonstration prepared the teams for field exercises. The classroom demonstration incorporated contract compliance and project implementation.

**Forest Measurement Exercise:** The field exercise incorporated the demonstration project into actual field applications. The students will completed fixed plot and variable plot inventory measurements, which will include tree measurements, attributes, basal area calculations, and other forest measurements.

#### Day 2- Thinning, Hazard Fuels Reduction and Biomass Applications

The second day included hazardous fuels reduction, local fire ecology, forestry equipment and biomass treatments and equipment.

**Field exercise:**

Forest Thinning and/or Hazard Fuels Demonstration included classroom contract review, contract compliance, and exercise basics.

Forest Thinning and/or Hazard Fuels Exercise were completed on the contract site. The field exercise started with a chainsaw safety class and demonstration. Each team completed the on the ground marking, measurements, and contract compliance.

#### Day 3 – Introduction to Forest Restoration Principles, Tools and Equipment and Wildland Fire Training and Development.

The training included types of forest and habitat restoration, restoration principles, tools, and implementation. The curriculum included habitat restoration techniques in forest health, erosion control, and fire mitigation.

**Introduction to Wildland Fire:** Luther Clements, Assistant Fire Management Operations, Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs introduced the students to Wildland fire basic terminology, training and certification, crew development and sponsorship, and contract crew opportunities. This section was designed to provide the basic information and develop a work plan to training and long-term Wildland fire crew development.

#### Day 4- Field Trip

The field trip visited three (3) different sites, each highlighting completed or in progress service contract compliance. The first site was a mechanical fuels treatment site, the second was a fire restoration site and the last was a hazard fuel treatment site.

Forest Thinning/Hazard Fuels Demonstration: A restoration contract was reviewed and the participant teams implemented the week's worth of training on an actual site. The teams used the actual Forest Service site guidelines to mark the site for treatment.

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