



Intertribal Timber Council TIMBER NOTES

Fall 2015

President's Message: 2015 Devastating Fire Season



Phil Rigdon

As I write this message – in early October, the 2015 fire season is winding down (although southern California remains a tinder box), and here in the Northwest the tribes and BIA are trying to assess the damage wildland fire has done to our trust timber resources over the last eight weeks. By any measure, it is going to be a devastating fire season.

In the past, southwestern tribes have had their bad years, like the Ro-

deo-Chedeski fire in 2002 and the Wallow Fire in 2011. This summer, fire landed squarely on Northwest tribes. On my Reservation – Yakama – lightning ignited the Cougar Creek fire August 10 and it wasn't contained until the middle of September. 41,000 acres of our land was burned. On August 12, the County Line 2 fire started on Warm Springs. On August 13 and 14, the North Star and Tunk Block fires ignited on and near the Colville Reservation. Also on August 14, just to the west of the Colville Reservation, the Okanogan complex fires got started, threatening the towns of Omak and Okanogan, and the Carpenter Road fire ignited just off the Spokane Reservation. About the same time, fires ignited

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President's Message

by Phil Rigdon

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that involved the Nez Perce and Confederated Salish and Kootenai Reservations. Many of these fires exploded out of hand, and weren't battled into control until the past week or two.

So far, initial estimates are that 412,000 tribal acres burned this summer in the Northwest, and that these are the biggest fires ever recorded on four or five reservations. On three reservations – Colville, Yakama and Spokane, projected fire mortality is estimated at 2 billion board feet – six times the total national tribal harvest in recent years. The lost value to our tribes is perhaps \$240 million.

There are numerous contributors to these fires. Years of drought and increasing temperatures across all the west set the stage, and storms and winds helped ignite and spread the fires. But also contributing were two man-made factors: insufficient preparation on a regional or even national basis, including staffing, and the national fire policy that prioritizes trying to save personal property.

In July and August, the eruption of fires, particularly in California, drew much of the available fire fighting resources. Many of these fires threatened settled areas, and the national fire fighting priority to protect life and property drained fire crews from other parts of the West. When fire then struck the reservations in the Northwest, there was insufficient manpower to aggressively attack. And even while some of these reservation fires were already burning, those limited crews were sent off to fight other fires threatening structures. As a result, fires among Indian trust forests were allowed to expand. In effect, the Indian trust timber resource was sacrificed so that private property, including such things as barns and vacation cabins, could be protected. We believe this policy of prioritizing private property over the trust protection of essential forest resources needs to

be re-evaluated.

Moreover, as crews were eventually made available to contain fires on reservations, the lack of trained personnel in key positions often slowed or prevented the dedication of fire fighting resources. On the Yakama Reservation, several bulldozers sat idle during the fire due to the lack of single resource dozer bosses and strike team leaders.

Now, as these fires are barely cool, tribes are confronted with two immediately critical tasks: stabilizing and replanting the burned over land and trying to recover what value we can from our burned forests. The Bureau of Indian Affairs has initially



projected that \$25 million is needed for burned area replanting, with an as-yet undetermined amount needed for emergency land recovery, including protecting the soil and water and minimizing damage to habitats for fish, animals and plants. Burned Area Recovery funding is a regular part of the Interior Department's fire budget, but it is unclear, given the severity of the fires, if the funds provided will be enough to put our forests fully on the path to recovery. Once the BAR needs are clarified, we hope the Interior Department will secure the funds for the complete rehabilitation and future

productivity of our forests.

Also immediately, we must try to conduct a speedy salvage operation to try to capture what value we can from our burned forest assets. But the volume is so great that we will be trying to move up to three times our usual annual harvest in a window of just 18 months, selling these logs into an already oversaturated market. BIA Forest management funding, already so insufficient as to prevent meeting tribes' annual timber sales targets, needs an immediate and sizable increase to provide for these salvage operations. The ITC has very initially estimated the needed increase at \$15 million, or more than half of the BIA's current national TPA Forestry budget. We are conveying this request to the Interior Department and Congress.

In sum, the federal government's insufficient funding and staffing for BIA Forestry has prevented meeting tribes' annual harvest targets, depriving tribes of needed revenue and leaving timber assets standing in the forest, where they are subject to fire. When fire strikes, tribal response is hindered by inadequately funded preparedness and personnel, and then is further constrained by the prioritization of private property over federally protected trust assets. Lastly, and we hope this is not the case, when our timber assets do burn, a federal failure to provide for full and rapid salvage will additionally deprive tribes of what little value we may be able to recover from our burned timber, and inadequate BAR funds will diminish the long-term value and use of our trust forest asset.

It will take decades for tribal forests to regenerate, during which the tribes will be deprived of vital economic and cultural resources. In the meantime, in just the last eight weeks, the federal government's second-tier policy and funding treatment of Indian trust timber has cost us hundreds of millions of dollars. 🌲

Symposium Committee

by Howard Teasley, Jr., Chair



Howard Teasley, Jr.

The Symposium Committee would like to welcome the Intertribal Timber Council guests and colleagues to Arizona. Just a quick drive from Phoenix International Airport to come and visit the San Carlos Apache Nation, April 4th – 7th, 2016, San Carlos, Arizona for the Fortieth Annual National Indian Timber Symposium. The theme of this year's symposium is ***“Strengthening Traditional Connections to the Land: The Future of Forest Management”***.

Currently, we are going to be golfing at Apache Stronghold Golf Club for the Sunday, ITC Pre-Symposium Golf Tournament. Our workshop for Monday will include – Basket & Cradle-

board Crafting, Native Foods Field Trip, Timber Sale / Resource Benefit Fire Field Trip, and Fire Policy Update. Tuesday of the symposium will have Restoring Fire to the Landscape in Indian Country and Workforce Development as panel discussions. Thursday morning will open with the traditional Thursday updates and the three workshops to follow, Woodland Implementation of IFMAT, Ancestral Foods & Knowledge: Empowering Native Communities, Land Management, & Economics, and Fire Prevention.

We are currently preparing for our quarterly meeting in Portland, OR, December 8th -10th, 2015. This is where the symposium committee and the staff of the San Carlos Apache Nation will solidify the rest of the symposium details for next spring.

See you in San Carlos, Arizona!!

Thank you - Qe'ciyew'yew 🌲



The Intertribal Timber Council Newsletter is published three times a year by the Intertribal Timber Council Executive Committee as a service to Tribes/Native Alaskan Corporations with timber resources or interest. We encourage information relating to Indian forestry to be submitted for publication and welcome suggestions.

Write or call the ITC office:

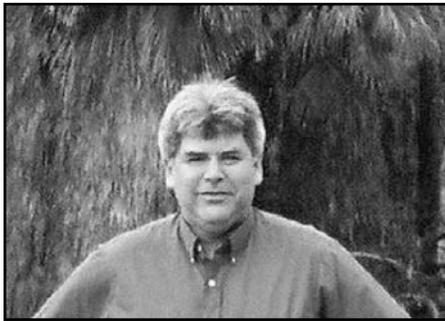
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Picture of Apache Stronghold Golf Course .

Technical Specialist

by Don Motanic



Don Motanic

Creating an Effective Tribal Natural Resource Leadership (TNRL) Strategy

"I don't want others to go through what I did," said Arthur "Butch" Blazer. Butch was describing his challenges during his development as a leader inside and outside of Indian Country. He sat inside his office in Washington, D.C. and described how he co-founded and developed a network to establish the Native American Fish and Wildlife Society. It was a challenge to establish the Society and he'd like new leaders to have more support than he did back in those days.

Developing our tribal youth and leadership was one of his top priorities highlighted in his presentation during the 2015 Indian Timber Symposium. IFMAT-III also shared his viewpoint with developing leadership.



IFMAT-III made the following recommendation:

"CE6. A strategy similar to the national agriculture leadership network should be developed that allows tribes, the BIA and the ITC to work together to address the leadership and upper level management skill needs identified in the workforce survey."

It's important to note that the recommendation states "strategy" and not just a single program or process to address the leadership and management skills for tribal natural resource leaders. In this article I will share some ideas and concepts for a TNRL Strategy.

What is a leadership development strategy?

I found this interesting quote about leadership development strategy by Lorri Frefield from Training Magazine:

"A leadership development strategy defines the goals and expectations for leaders in your organization. It also defines the key capabilities, competencies, and experiences of a successful leader in your organization. Those definitions drive leadership selection, rewards, and the various supporting development programs. Managed in this strategic way, leadership development becomes more than simple lip service for your organization."

The gap in leadership development has been caused by the current model where a person may receive some basic leadership training like a crew boss or basic supervisor training, then the next level of leadership development jumps all the way up to the executive development training for tribal council or senior level for the federal government, which is received at special tribal government leadership institutes and federal programs around the nation.

The gap in leadership development with tribal natural resources has some unique situations that include some of the following unique situations that was highlighted in a Tribal Managers Association Feasibility Study (Jacobson, et al., 2006):

1. Leadership training for tribal natural resource managers is non-existent in any formal institutions or school, although technical training like silviculture has opportunities.
2. Tribal governments are growing at a very fast pace and retirements in staff often leave tribal managers to resolve, in relative isolation, the conflicts created by working in an intergovernmental context of western society public administration approaches while striving to maintain and strengthen specific tribal or

multiple tribal cultural values, governance styles, and public administration approaches.

3. Tribal and BIA natural resource managers have a need for an on-going leadership development strategy to create a network because tribal government is complex and tribal government professionals need an on-going mentoring process to discuss and share ideas and concerns they face with others who understand the challenges of tribal governance.
4. Tribal natural resource managers have a unique situation where they may have additional responsibilities to respond to the communities they represent and in which they work. Tribal managers are often not afforded the relative distance between their work, home, family and/or social circles that other public administrators are more prone to experience. The intricacy of tribal politics is increasing and a TNRL strategy with a mentoring network can be a link to others who face similar issues. The assumption is many tribal managers are dealing with many of the same issues. Managers not only create leadership to help communities with decisions, but also must live with those decisions and how to deal with any negative situations.

These are just a few unique situations that face a TNRL Strategy and develop a core set of training modules and mentoring system that could help build a support network of potential leaders. The Ag Forestry Leadership network has the following concepts with the programs throughout the nation:

- Community: develop leadership programs that foster trust, respect, and appreciation of diversity in the community

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Technical Specialist

by Don Motanic

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- Vision: help community members develop a vision of what they want to become

- Learning: stimulate learning communities where people expand their collective thinking and learn together
- Action: stimulate action and encourage “leadership by doing”

Here’s also a sample of what a typical 18 month set of 3 day sessions could be based on the AgForestry model:

- First Year -

Leadership, Communication, and Vision
Group Dynamics and Public Speaking
Working with the Media
Cultural/Social Issues
Tribal Government
National Government
Forestry Issues

- Second Year -

Agriculture Issues
Fisheries Issues
Crime and Corrections
Wildlife Issues
International Study
Public Policy
Launching Your Leadership Resources

The Washington State AgForestry Program requires 58 days over a two year time period with most of the sessions that include a Saturday. The sessions are normally hosted by a university to help facilitate the trainings.

This article hopefully has provided some background and ideas about developing a TNRL Strategy that would include a leadership development program and a supporting mentoring network. 🌲

Awards Committee

by Orvie Danzuka, Acting Chair



Orvie Danzuka

The Intertribal Timber Council is currently accepting nominations for the Earle R. Wilcox Individual Achievement, and National Forester of the Year awards.

The deadline to submit nominations for these awards is January 11, 2016, which at the time of writing is less than 3 months away.

If you are curious about the awards and what they are, or wondering what it takes to nominate someone, please check the ITC awards website at http://www.itcnet.org/about_us/awards.html. For those who need a break from the computer, here is some information about the awards and what it takes. For full details please see the website or contact the ITC office. 1-503- 282-4296.

- The application requires filling out a form and getting 2 letters of support.
- The awards are focused on contributions to Tribal forestry programs at local to national levels. Other natural resource specialists whose work is significant and benefits tribal forests will be considered as well.
- You can email or mail the applications to ITC. You can also fax, but you must mail the original as well.
- Candidates can be nominated for regional awards or the national award based on their contributions to Tribal efforts.
- If someone was nominated in the past but did not receive an award, they can be nominated again. Regional award recipients can be nominated again, but not within ten years of receipt of first or prior award. Past winners of the National Award cannot receive the award again.
- Please ensure that all information is filled out completely and

accurately and all supporting documentation is included. Incomplete applications will not be considered.

The nominations for each respective category have been down over the past few years. I doubt that it is for lack of good work that is worthy of recognition, but rather a misunderstanding of the requirements for the awards. Please review the minimum requirements and submit a nomination for individuals that are eligible.

Lastly, we are seeking individuals to join the Awards Committee. The members of the Committee are heavily involved with the other respective committees and I have stepped in temporarily since the Education and Awards Committee are somewhat related. If you know someone who would be a good fit and has the time to commit please refer them to myself or anyone involved in ITC to get them started.

See you in Portland in December! 🌲

Operations Committee

by Jim Durglo, Chairman



Happy Fall everyone! I hope this article of the Timber Notes, finds you safe and fully recovered from the epic fire season.

Jim Durglo

I wanted to thank John DeGroot, Nez Perce and Dave Bingaman, Quinault Nation for covering the September Operations Committee during my brief absence. Thank You! Their notes are summarized below:

Congressional Hearing on Comparative Forest Management-

ITC President Rigdon will testify at the Public Lands Sub-committee of the House Natural Resource Committee on comparative forest management practices across agencies on Tuesday, September 29th.

TFPA Workshops

Jim Erickson provided a brief report and draft scope for the next workshops as a guide for continued discussion.



The Fall season brings a change of colors and also is a time when our native people did most of the hunting to harvest enough meat to last through the winter months. The elders talk about the ethic of respect for the animals, who give their lives so that the people can live. This is why we should never waste any part of the animal. The value of respect for all living things is one of the most important values conveyed by our ancestors. It is evident in how we, as native people care and manage our lands for resilience and sustainability for future generations.

1. A scope of work needs to be developed for the upcoming workshop(s).

Videoring workshop(s) would be dependent upon left over funding.

2. There is desire to monitor and track TFPA proposals, project progress, and obstructions. USFS has a system to track, but ITC wants to evaluate for effectiveness.
3. There is a continued need to provide technical assistance to folks participating in past workshops and moving forward, as well as to assist new participants. Roles and responsibilities-USFS needs to identify personnel as experts and provide clarity to ITC.
4. Development of a joint task force between ITC and USFS is needed to identify funding sources and review USFS process. We need to review if P.L. 93-638 authority can



CSKT had an outbreak of lightning fires in mid-August, with approximately 6 starts. The largest being the Melton I Fire. It grew to approximately 3,300 acres of grass and timber through state, fee, and tribal lands. We will aggressively salvage an estimated 3 million feet of Ponderosa pine and Douglas-fir timber worth about \$750K in stumpage. We initially ordered a Type II Management Team, but quickly realized that the order would go unfilled. Our own Division of Fire staff, with the help of local contractors, Type 3 organization managed the fire.

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Operations Committee

by Jim Durglo, Chairman

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be used by USDA for TFPA projects.

5. ITC will continue to administer and provide oversight to USFS. On a monthly basis is preferred.

Forest Climate Working Group

Matt Hill volunteered to attend meetings in DC to keep ITC informed.

Tribal Natural Resource Leadership Program-

ITC and Butch Blazer will continue work on developing a Tribal Leadership Program. Several federal agencies are interested in supporting this type of training for tribal individuals. The Work Force Development survey showed staff wanted leadership training. Don Motanic suggested that Wedgewood (Florida Ag/Forestry) might be willing to help ITC on this project.

Don volunteered to take the lead for ITC and Adrian Leighton volunteered to help in contacting.

Yale School of Forestry-ITC Tribal Forestry Summit

This will occur October 16-18, 2015 at Yale. Several ITC representatives will attend.

ITC Letter to House Energy Committee to Support Bio-mass

Matt Hill drafted a letter for approval addressed to the House on Indian Energy bill, as requested by them, supporting Bio-mass demonstration projects. It is very similar to the letter to the Senate and identifies barriers to tribes.

Anchor Forests

Mr. Vinnie Corrao, NW Forest Management and project coordinator called in to discuss the Anchor Forest report about the 6 deliverable tasks.

Tasks 3 thru 6 have been completed as far as data collection.

Task 1-Infrastructure Analysis and Timber Volumes is 95% completed.

Task 2-data about the Tapash Collaborative is totally completed, finishing report.

NW Forest Management is making recommendations and conclusions. They will be sending a draft to the oversight committee the first week in October. The Executive Summary is started but will not be complete until the oversight committee completes their review. NWFM is working with a contractor to format the document, and working with Laura to get printing costs. They hope to have it printed by end of the year for distribution.

Steve Andringa, Yakama Nation is working with Jim Peterson, Evergreen Magazine on the Communications Plan.

IFMAT III Implementation

Jim Hubbard is designated as the coordinator for the USFS and will assign individuals to implementation teams. There are 8 task groups identified by ITC and members have been assigned. ITC needs to prioritize these tasks, although some groups have already started (TFPA, Work Force). No meetings have occurred until USFS staff are identified to work on each group.

Task group assignments and priorities will continue to be discussed with Butch.

Research sub-committee

There is an additional \$20,000 for student research projects from the USFS Pacific Northwest Research Station in addition to the \$25,000 allocated for this year which is held at Southern Research station. There is need to identify students and projects to commit the money soon. Adrian will check with Monica to see if the funding can be awarded for multiple years, and if tribes are eligible to apply for the research funds and carry-over funds.

There will be a strategic planning session at the next ITC meeting in Portland, Oregon in December.

The sub-committee is still trying to understand how the BIA STEM

initiative is supposed to work. BIA managers can identify native students or recent professionals (non-competitively) to fill the hard to fill STEM fields. Additional discussion with BIA will continue on this topic.

Reporting Accomplishments

The committee discussed the metrics reported through GPRA on forest inventories and accomplishment, as well as concerns with the Funding and Position Analysis reports. It should be requested of the new BIA Chief Forester that ITC be involved with revising and updating reporting criteria.

The discussion transitioned to the cost of recent and ongoing fires and about the short and long term impacts to tribal lands from loss of volume and economy to inhabitants and surrounding areas.

Quiet Crisis

The U.S. Commission on Civil Rights report on Quiet Crisis was completed 10 years ago by an 8 member independent group. It reported on impacts to Indian Country by 6 Departments. There is concern the Recommendations and Findings from that report have failed to be adequately addressed to date. There is a need to communicate the consequences on failures to provide for needs in Indian Country. An update is in the works and the recent fires might be a good case to review as to impacts to reservations. Gary recommends pushing for an Indian advisory committee to the Commission.

Biomass Demonstration Project Legislation Letter

Matt Hill will draft a letter supporting the legislation involving the tribal biomass demonstration project.

The next Operations Committee meeting is scheduled for December 9th, at the ITC Office in Portland. We hope to see you there. 

BIA – Central Office, Division of Forestry and Wildland Fire

by Rudy Peone, Chief Forester

Forestry Budget:

The forestry budget for FY2016 has not yet been finalized. As of September 25, 2015 we are hopeful to be operating under a Continuing Resolution. A continuing resolution continues the pre-existing appropriation for the Bureau's Operation of Indian Programs (OIP) account at the same level as the previous fiscal year (or with minor modifications) for a set amount of time. As in previous years, a continuing resolution typically provides funding at a rate or formula based on the previous year's funding (for example, 25% of last year's funding minus any reductions). The funding extends until a specific date, when another % of last year's budget is allocated or, a regular appropriations bill is passed, whichever comes first. Operating on a

continuing resolution and at last year's Forestry budget level is not necessarily a bad thing, as it preserves the increases realized in FY14, but the prospect of receiving the \$4 million dollar Project Funding increase as indicated in the FY16 President's Budget would certainly be better.

Also on our radar screen is the recent decline of Forest Health Protection funding that we have seen in recent years. Forest Health Protection funding is made possible through the State and Private Forestry (S&PF) organization of the USDA Forest Service. This funding is transferred from Agriculture to Interior every year. We typically see the funding transferred to the BIA in April, which is when we historically distribute the funding to the field. The Forest Service budget for the Forest Health program in FY15

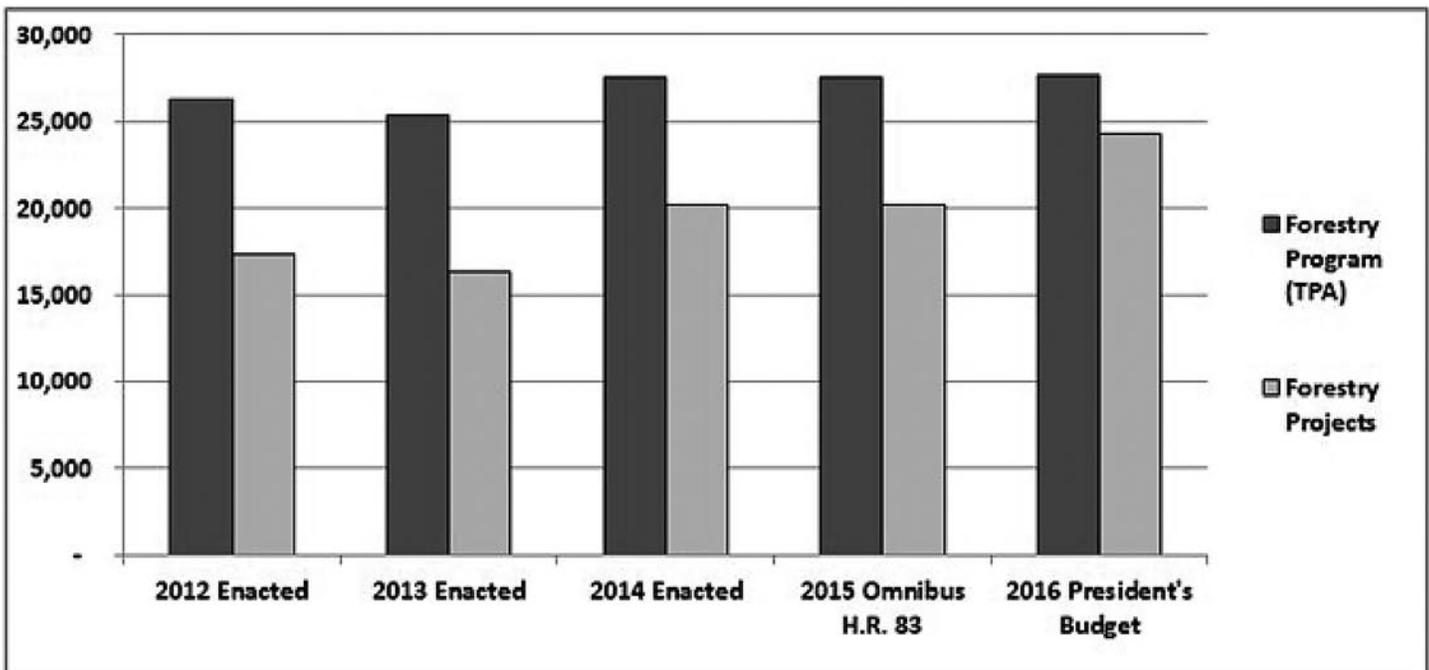
was \$105 million of which Interior received \$2.2 million (2% of total). Tribes also receive technical assistance from the Regional Forest Service Forest Health staff.

Youth Initiatives:

BIA TREES Pathways Program

The Pacific Region hosted the annual BIA Pathways Program Field Trip. The six day field trip provided the Pathways students with an opportunity to see Indian forestry in action. The group visited the Yurok, Hoopa and Karuk forestry programs and were provided with a field trip at each location focusing on the unique attributes of each program. The student's experiential learning was facilitated by a cadre made up of both BIA and Tribal foresters covering forestry topics such as

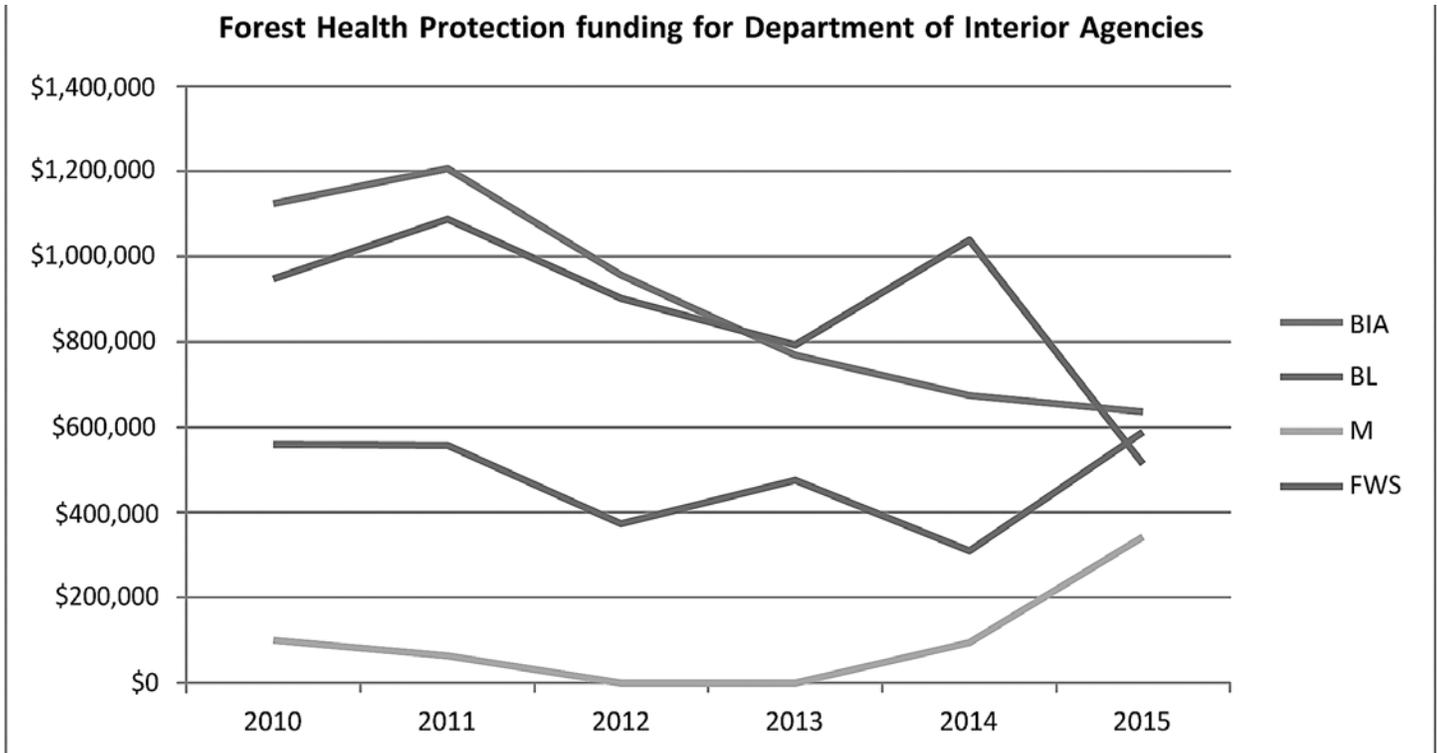
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Budget Line	Forestry (Total)	2012 Enacted	2013 Enacted	2014 Enacted	2015 Omnibus H.R. 83	2016 President's Budget
A0N9C	Forestry Program (TPA)	26,232	25,414	27,567	27,526	27,643
A0N3E	Forestry Projects	17,342	16,328	20,168	20,209	24,271

BIA – Central Office, Division of Forestry and Wildland Fire

by Rudy Peone, Chief Forester



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TREES group picture with Redwood from this summer's training 2015

silviculture, forest management, sale preparation and administration, and forest development. A benefit of having a diverse cadre allowed the students to see and hear the forestry issues from various perspectives ranging from the field level to the regional level.

This year's BIA Pathways Program Field Trip marks the second such field based learning event for Pathways stu-

dents and due to its success it represents an integral part of the program to develop the next generation of BIA and Tribal Foresters.

Engaging the Next Generation – DOI Initiative

The Division of Forestry and Wildland Fire Management is funding various projects to support the Secretary's goals of the youth initiative to increase engagement with the next generation, by providing youth with opportunities to play, learn, serve and work. The projects funded by the BIA in FY15 will impact the lives of 471 youth.

Forestry and Wildlife Pathways Internships

With the implementation and transition to the Pathways Internship program, the Division is beginning to see a significant increase in the number of American Indian and Alaska Native students interested in Forestry and Wildland Fire Internships due to the national outreach through USA Jobs under the new program.

The Division of Forestry and Wildland Fire Management is funding up to 45 internships at various locations across the US using various strategies and HR flexibilities to attract and recruit

more Native youth into in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) related occupations such as forestry, rangeland and agriculture science and technology fields, including up to \$5,000 in paid tuition assistance. In addition to tuition assistance, students are placed into developmental summer rotational assignments to address high student expectations and provide them with a greater understanding of BIA's various programs. The national program is administered by the Salish Kootenai Tribal College, Tribal Research and Education in Ecosystem Sciences (TREES) program. The Division also provided funding and resources to tribal natural resources programs that teach youth cultural awareness, natural resource management, forest resources management, land restoration with the goal of sparking interest in careers in the Natural Resource field. Some tribal programs also offer natural resource internships with potential job placements for college students.

Youth-in-Forestry Initiative

The Division of Forestry and Wildland Fire Management funded distributed over \$1 million dollars to fund

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BIA – Central Office, Division of Forestry and Wildland Fire

by Rudy Peone, Chief Forester

(Continued from page 9)

8 youth-in-forestry projects in FY15. These projects are designed to give youth hands-on experience in classrooms and in the field of forestry, with particular emphasis on mensuration, dendrology, and forest ecology and their relationship to climate change and, the need to develop long-term forest management strategies that consider climate variability.

fied and mitigated to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of our youth programs or projects.

Central Office Details:

The Division of Forestry and Wildland Fire Management would encourage detail opportunities for leaders throughout our organization to work on special projects that are national in scope, here in our office in Washington, DC. Generally work assignments

2005 which would run for 10 years and show 100 percent attainment by September 30, 2015.

As of September 15, 2015 296 of the 309 forested reservations have current forest management plans. There is a draft custodial FMP prepared and awaiting final approval for these remaining

13. The following table lists the status by Region.

Region	Plans Remaining	Completed Plans	Total	Percent Completed
Alaska	0	11	11	100%
Eastern	0	23	23	100%
Eastern Oklahoma	0	14	14	100%
Great Plains	0	14	14	100%
Midwest	3	38	41	93%
Navajo	0	1	1	100%
Northwest	3	43	46	93%
Pacific	1	68	69	99%
Rocky Mountain	0	7	7	100%
Southern Plains	0	22	22	100%
Southwest	0	24	24	100%
Western	6	31	37	84%
Totals	13	296	309	96%

Internship Program Changes and Coordination

The new Youth Coordinator is in the process of mapping the Pathways Internship program's life-cycle processes to identify barriers and evaluate opportunities for BIA to affect program improvements and streamlining process along the way. Together these developments have placed the Pathways Internship program into a central role as the most productive method to close the gap of qualified entry-level recruits of American Indian and Alaska Native students available to begin federal STEM careers across Indian country. Moving forward, activities are monitored and analyzed to ensure program barriers or issues are identi-

would range from 2 to 4 weeks.

This is an excellent opportunity to gain critical insight in Central Office operations and its niche in the larger BIA organization, exposure to senior leadership, budget formulation and execution, and what it takes to enact new policy.

Branch of Forest Resources Planning

Forest Management Plans

In April 1999 a Memorandum from the Assistant Secretary's office directed the BIA to ensure Forested Reservations were covered by Forest Management Plans. In 2004 BIA Forestry was directed by OMB to have a GPRA measure established in FY

Continuous Forest Inventory projects (CFI) provide the bulk of the time and effort for BOFRP staff who work with tribes and Regions. CFI's re-measure permanent plots on tribal lands every 10-20 years depending on the amount of commercial timber management. Funding is provided through Forest Management Inventory & Planning funding requests made by the regions for non-recurring funds. We currently have 32 ongoing CFI's Re-measurements, data verification and data analysis. For future CFI's 2016 Database, field manual and planning will see the addition of 6 with 9 additional Stocking Studies.

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BIA – Central Office, Division of Forestry and Wildland Fire

by Rudy Peone, Chief Forester

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Data and Reporting applications

The Division of Forestry and Wildland Fire Management (DFWFM) of the Office of Trust Services (OTS) of the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) is responsible for providing coordination, management, planning, oversight and monitoring for all activities related to development and protection of trust forest resources on more than 18 million acres of trust forest land. The Branch of Forest Resources Planning (BOFRP) is the technical branch of the DFWFM that provides technical Forestry Services. In addition, the National Wildland Fire Program has protection responsibility on about 60 million acres of trust and non-trust land.

BOFRP has applications called the Indian Forestry Database (InFoDat) and Forest Inventory database. InFoDat is an Executive Information Application that collects summary data for project management for different regions, including a percent complete and status of forestry projects, forest acres, total reservation acres, timber sales and timber cut. Forest Inventory database stores continuous forest & other forest inventories as well as provides applications for data entry and analysis.

DFWFM exercises program oversight and provides planning and scheduling of Bureau-wide forestry activities at the national level to ensure that regulatory and policy requirements are followed and that technical standards of sound forest management are upheld. As part of this mission, DFWFM tracks Forest Development Treatments, Timber Sales, Forest Inventory and Planning Projects and Forest Health Treatments.

Because of this oversight responsibility in late 2013 the BOFRP started plans to replace the current Forestry Reporting application known as the Indian Forestry Database (InFoDat) and consolidate 90 separate Forest Inventory data into a single database.

Both the InFoDat and the Forest Inventory databases have been in use

for over 30 years in various formats that have evolved from paper ledgers, punch cards, spreadsheets to the current Microsoft Access database. The useful life cycles are rapidly coming to an end due to changes in operating systems and user's needs.

The replacement for InFoDat is the Forest Information Reporting Statistics & Tracking (FIRST) application and is scheduled to go live later in 2016. FIRST is designed around a web interface that will initially be deployed within the government network. Tribal Forest manager access is a future goal we are working on with Indian Affairs IT. The majority of development is complete and currently in the early stages of testing.

The Forest Inventory database and Application allows users to enter data into the Access Databases. Each Access Database needs to be placed into a specific location known by the application when updated by the user interface. Obvious problems are encountered with multiple databases, such as versioning control, locating files and consistent updating of the data entry and analysis applications. The current applications are written in Visual Basic (VB.NET) with some legacy FORTRAN code; both code bases are at the end of their life cycles.

The current architecture does not allow measurement data from multiple reservations to be consolidated easily, and requires constant relocating of the existing Access Databases. Re-engineering the application will meet the following goals:

- Allow data to be consolidated
- Reach agreement regarding the data to be collected from each project
- Avoid the current need to manage 90 separate databases for forestry data
- Improve the management and user entry procedures for the application
- Provide for a secure data store

The new forest Inventory database has a planned release date in mid-2017

and will be centrally located on a government server.

National Advanced Silviculture Program (NASP):

Opportunity for Tribal and BIA foresters to attend the NASP still exists and a memo requesting applications has been sent to the Regional Directors on 09/24/15. The 2016/2017 session marks the 10th year that the 4 modules of intensive silviculture course work have been offered. As in previous years, Central Office will pay the tuition which includes lodging and most meals, leaving travel costs and nominal per diem the responsibility of the sending Agency, Tribe or Region. Questions or comments about this program may be directed to Karen DeBord, Forester,

BOFRP, at (720) 484-3214 or karen.debord@bia.gov.

Fire Management

Fire Activity:

On August 13, 2015, the National Preparedness Level (PL) went to level 5, which is the highest PL possible. The National Interagency Coordination Center stayed at PL 5 until Sunday September 6, 2015. To date, the number of fires reported on Trust land in 2015 is 3,127 wildfires and 359,390 acres have burned. The majority of the fire starts and acres burned occurred in August, during a 30 day period, in the Pacific Northwest. The activity resulted from a prolonged drought in the area, low winter snowpack throughout the region, record high temperatures in many areas of the northwest, lightning activity, followed by winds gust up to 60 miles per hour.

The Governor of Washington requested and received an Emergency Declaration for Colville, Yakama, Kalispell, and Spokane Tribes. Many areas, on and off trust, were heavily impacted and fire management personnel focused primarily on the safety of firefighter and the public. The number of fires that started in a short period of time and the wind driven fire intensities quickly overwhelmed the interagency

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BIA – Central Office, Division of Forestry and Wildland Fire

by Rudy Peone, Chief Forester

(Continued from page 11)

fire response availability. Assistance agreements were activated and international assistance was provided by Australia, New Zealand and Canada. Many of these resources are still engaged in firefighting operations.

The table below lists the largest fires and additional fire information.

helitack programs plus other aviation personnel directly supported 18 agencies with aircraft for suppression use this year.

The aviation program utilized creative restructuring this year which has resulted in increased depth freeing aviation personnel to provide expertise to the Northwest Multiagency Coordi-

to replant timberlands burned in this year's Indian Country fires. Emergency Stabilization (ES) needs include community and infrastructure protection, road and culvert repairs, cultural assessments and mitigation treatments, and weed assessment and treatment. ES needs are not currently known but are expected to be extensive.

Fire Name	Region	Agency	Acres	IMT type	%Containment	Cost
Cougar Creek	Northwest	Yakama	53,523	2	97	18.8M
County Line 2	Northwest	Warm Springs	67,207	2	97	16M
North Star	Northwest	Colville	211,418	1	UNK	21.1M
Carpenter Road	Northwest	Spokane	65,068	2	90	19.4M
Clearwater Complex	Northwest	Nez Perce	68,127	1	94	UNK
Tunk Block	Northwest	Colville	161,440	1	UNK	28.9M
Milton 1	Northwest	Flathead	3,073	3	UNK	750K
Heart Butte (Family Peak Complex)	Rocky Mtn	Blackfeet	53,889	2	NR	3.5M

Hazardous Fuels Reduction:

Reserved Treaty Rights Land (RTRL) third and final distribution of funding has been disbursed to the regions. To date, BWFM has allocated \$10 million of RTRL funds. Preparations are being made for RTRL FY16 funds ensuring that approved projects that span multiple years are addressed.

Regions are lagging behind last year's pace for obligating Fuels Base funds and may be subject to unobligated funds being swept to pay for Suppression costs. The BWFM has notified Regions via conference calls and emails reminding them of their current Fuels Base budget levels, strongly urging that all Fuels Base funds are obligated as soon as possible to avoid being swept.

Operations:

Aviation exclusive use helicopter

nation Group.

Burned Area Emergency Response:

Burned Area Emergency Response (BAER) started off slow with a light fire season in the Southwest, but ramped up quickly with a record fire season in the Northwest region. Currently both the BIA and tribes have tasked several BAER teams to complete assessments and BAER plans on the County Line fire on Warm Springs, Cougar Creek fire on Yakama, the Tunk Block and North Star fires on the Colville, the Spotted Eagle fire on Blackfeet, and Carpenter Road fire on Spokane reservations. These fires have burned over 300 thousand acres with a substantial amount of that acreage designated as timberlands. It is estimated that the Burned Area Rehabilitation (BAR) needs could be \$25 million

Determination of ES needs is ongoing.

Other BAER activity this year has occurred on the Muddy Creek Two fire on Northern Cheyenne, Willow fire on Ft. Mojave, and the Anza fire on Santa Rosa in Southern California. This year's ES funding limit is \$6.3 million and is currently meeting that need. BAR funding disbursed was \$4.2 million for treatments. Secretarial Order 3336 signed in May requires that the departmental ES and BAR policy be reviewed and updated. The probable outcomes of the review will likely result in an increase of five years for the allowed time to complete BAR treatments. Also, potential changes to the BAR funding allocation process is being discussed. 🌲

Washington DC Update

by Mark Phillips and Matt Hill



Mark Phillips

1) Resilient Forests bill passes House, in Senate referred to Agriculture Committee.

Legislation to strengthen the Tribal Forest Protection Act (TFPA), set up a pilot program for tribal management of National Forest lands, and apply PL 93-638 to TFPA in the Forest Service passed the House July 8. The bill, the Resilient Forests Act (H.R. 2647, House Report 114-85, Parts 1 and 2) passed on a vote of 262 to 167. Overall, the bill seeks to streamline forest health activities on National Forests and BLM lands. For tribes, Section 701 of the bill would clarify and expedite Forest Service and BLM consideration of TFPA requests and Section 702 would authorize a pilot program, at the discretion of the Ag and Interior Secretaries, for tribes to take over management of National Forests and BLM forested lands to conduct resilient forest activities under the management authority in the National Indian Forest Resources Management Act. During House floor debate, an amendment by Rep. Lujan Grisham (D-NM) was unanimously adopted to authorize a demonstration project for the Secretaries of Agriculture and Interior to apply the Indian Self-Determination Act (PL 93-638) to Tribal Forest Protection Act projects. This would extend PL 93-638 authority into the Department of Agriculture and its US Forest Service.

The Administration opposed the bill (but not an explicit veto threat), particularly regarding the scope of the Categorical Exclusions and use of Stafford Act authority to fund emergency wildfire management, but made no mention of the tribal provisions.

Following House passage, the bill was transmitted to the Senate, where

it was referred to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition and Forestry. It is not clear how soon the Senate Ag Committee will take up H.R. 2647. Most Senators are pivoting their attention to wildfire funding issues and fixes, rather than forest management changes.

2) Carbon incentives bill introduced in Senate.

On July 9, Senator Jeanne Shaheen (D-NH) introduced S. 1733, a bill to authorize incentives for forest carbon sequestration. This legislation would pay cash incentives to private land owners for 15 to 30 forest carbon sequestration contracts on permanent conservation easements. It would also pay cash incentives for green building construction and rehabilitation. Tribal trust lands are not included, nor are individual Indian trust lands. The bill was among those subject to a Senate Agriculture Committee hearing July 16, but has little chance of moving.

3) Senate Ag Committee hears forestry bills (but not Resilient Forests); Bonnie supports carbon incentives.

The Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition and Forestry held a hearing July 16 on eight Senate forestry bills, but H.R. 2647, the Resilient Forests bill was not among them, most likely because the Committee hadn't received the bill in time to become familiar with it and include it in the hearing schedule. Among the bills the hearing did cover were –

- S. 1733, Sen. Shaheen's forest carbon sequestration incentives bill (see item 3 above), and
- S. 1100, Sen. John Thune's (R-SD) bill to require state and local approval of prescribed burns on federal land when the "Chief of the Forest Service has declared a very high or extreme fire danger". NOTE: the short and unclear drafted bill appears

to apply to any federal land whenever the USFS Chief would make such a declaration, and

so may include Indian trust lands. The bill also makes the US strictly liable for damages from prescribed burns.

The hearing's only witness was Robert Bonnie, the Agriculture Department's Under Secretary for Natural Resources and Environment. He supported Shaheen's carbon incentives bill, but expressed "serious concern" with Thune's prescribed burn bill.

4) Senate FY '16 approps adds \$2 million for BIA thinning; CR likely, but shutdown looms.

On June 23, the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee for Interior, Environment and Related Agencies introduced its FY 2016 bill, S. 1645, with its accompanying report (Senate Report 114-70). The bill adds \$2.0 million for thinning projects (and an additional \$179,000 for general cost increases) in BIA Forestry and also creates a separate appropriations account for payment of contract support costs (CSCs) to shield other BIA programs from having to help pay for CSCs when they exceed appropriated amounts. When they do exceed appropriated amounts, the new CSC account provides flexibility for payment of those overages.

See Chart on the top of next page

NOTE: The House and Senate Interior Appropriations bills as reported both comply with their Sec. 302(b) spending allocations provided under

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Matt Hill

FY 2015-2016 Interior Approps / BIA-IHS to date

	FY 2015	FY 2016 Admin.	FY 2016 House	FY 2016 Senate
Total Int. Approps.	\$ 30.106 billion	\$ 33.324 billion	\$ 30.232 billion	\$ 31.131 billion
BIA O.I.P.	\$ 2.429 billion	\$ 2.660 billion	\$ 2.505 billion	\$2.232 billion + \$277 million CSC
BIA Forestry	\$ 47.735 million	\$ 51.914 million	\$ 47.735 million	\$ 49.914 million
BIA Construction	\$ 128.9 million	\$ 188.9 million	\$ 187.6 million	\$ 135.2 million
Dol Wildland Fire	\$ 896.8 million	\$ 805+200 million	\$ 896.8 million	\$ 1.109 billion
IHS + IHS Const.	\$ 4.642 billion	\$ 5.103 billion	\$ 4.789 billion	\$ 4.779 billion

(Continued from page 13)

the final FY 2016 Congressional Budget Resolution, which adopts or goes below funding levels and sequester caps established in the Budget Control Act of 2011 (see item 5).

The House and Senate Appropriations Committees have both approved all twelve of their FY 2016 appropriations bills, and while the House has passed six, the Senate has not passed any due to partisan differences over spending levels. The Senate's gridlock prompted the House to stop considering any more of its regular FY '16 bills, including suspending floor debate on its FY '16 Interior, Environment and Related Agencies bill (H.R. 2822, H. Rpt. 114-170). During that House floor debate, the White House issued a veto threat on the bill, principally due to low levels of funding. For Indian programs, the veto threat noted the bill's failure to include the Administration's requested *Carriers* "fix" and the provision added to the bill by the House Committee blocking any development or implementation of BIA's proposed regulations on federal recognition of tribes.

With regular FY '16 appropriations bills blocked, Congress is now (as of this writing) turning to a continuing resolution to extend FY 2015 funding levels through December 11. The "CR" is expected to be passed before the October 1 start of FY 2016, but if conservative House Republican efforts to use the CR to defund Planned Parenthood upset the legis-

lation, the lack of extended funding after October 1 could cause a federal shutdown. House Speaker John Boehner's (R, OH) announced resignation, effective the end of October, may give him more latitude to push a CR past the objections of the conservative Republicans.

5) Debt limit increase needed by November.

Legislation to increase the federal debt limit is needed by about mid-November, when the U.S. Treasury Department, having exhausted various accounting maneuvers, is expected to bump up against the statutorily-set limit on how much the U.S. can borrow to help pay for its cash operating needs. Legislation to revise the limit upward, needed to prevent a federal cash flow crisis, is considered "must pass" and in the past has attracted great controversy, including prompting temporary shutdown of federal operations. Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell has pledged he will avoid a shutdown, but that has yet to be tested among this Congress's rambunctious and often divided Republicans.

6) FY '16 federal budget high-centered.

The start of FY 2016 once again brings the President and the Congress to odds over the federal budget. The conflict is brought about by the reimposition of the Budget Control Act of 2011. That law set tight federal spending limits through FY 2025, including mandatory spending cuts (or "sequester") to comply with those limits. In 2013, the sequester

was lifted for two years, through FY 2015. But with no further action, the sequester caps are automatically reimposed starting with FY 2016, setting the stage for budget showdowns between the Republican Congress and the President, who objects to the caps. This is expected to play out over the rest of this calendar year as Congress and the White House wrestle over such things as the CR, regular FY 2016 appropriations, the debt ceiling, and potential reconciliation legislation.

The Republicans' yet-to-be-introduced reconciliation bill will seek to impose, as law, the budget levels and policy issues set forth in the FY 2016 Congressional Budget Resolution. This resolution has been passed and calls for budget levels at or below the renewed sequester levels and calls for policy changes such as the repeal of Obamacare. The budget resolution only applies to Congress, however, and does not become law. The reconciliation bill, which seeks to bring existing law into compliance with the goals set in the budget resolution, is a regular bill and can become law. Additionally, reconciliation bills are not subject to Senate filibusters, and so can pass on a simple majority vote. Reconciliation bills are subject to all sorts of mischief, and can be vetoed. President Obama will veto reconciliation legislation coming out of the Republican Congress, and that veto still requires a two thirds majority to be overridden, which will not occur.

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7) Udall, Tester introduce bill to exempt BIA, IHS, Indian housing from sequester.

Senators Jon Tester (D-MT) and Tom Udall (D-NM) on June 3, 2015 introduced S. 1497, a bill to exempt funding for the Bureau of Indian Affairs, the Indian Health Service, and Indian housing programs in HUD from renewed application of across-the-board federal spending cuts, often referred to as “sequestration.” The Budget Control Act of 2011 mandated automatic sequestration cuts to achieve fixed federal budget targets if a larger budget deal could not be reached. A budget agreement in 2013 suspended those budget targets – and sequestration - for two fiscal years, but both come back into effect starting in FY 2016 if Congress fails to act. Udall estimates the sequester, if reimposed, would cut federal Indian budgets by \$500 million. S. 1497 was referred to the Senate Budget Committee, where it is dead.

8) SCIA hearing on trust reform

The Senate Committee on Indian Affairs held an oversight hearing July 8 on the issue of trust reform. The hearing was entitled “A Path Forward: Trust Modernization and Reform for Indian Lands.” Chairman John Barrasso (R-WY) presided, and Vice Chair Jon Tester (D-MT) and Committee members Mike Crapo (R-ID) and Tom Udall (D-NM) attended. Witnesses were –

- Assistant Secretary Kevin Washburn, who essentially defended the Interior Department’s efforts to improve the trust through more consultation and 638 contracting and compacting. He observed DoI is very careful of state and local views when considering taking land into trust and is hopeful for some *Carciere* solution acceptable to

all stakeholders. He also stoutly defended the Office of the Special Trustee.

- Ernie Stensgar for the Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians and Vice Chair of the Coeur d’Alene Tribe, who advocated strongly for S. 383, Senator Mike Crapo’s trust reform bill. And
- Brenda Lintinger of the Tunica-Biloxi Tribal Council for the United South and Eastern Tribes, who testified that “USET is supportive of S. 383, the Tribal Trust Asset Reform Act” while “deferring to those most directly affected for discussion of its specific provisions.” She cited five general principals to which USET wants trust reform to adhere: 1) strengthen trust standards, adopting implementing laws and regulations, 2) strengthen tribal sovereignty, empowering each tribe to define its path, 3) strengthen federal management for those trust assets still subject to federal control, 4) strengthen tribal-federal relations, as “one table with two chairs,” and 5) strengthen federal funding and its efficiency as “a pillar of trust responsibility.” She also urged passage of a *Carciere* fix that reaffirms land currently held in trust and confirms the Secretary’s ability to take future land into trust.

9) SCIA approves Trust Reform bill; Crapo notes ITC supports.

The Senate Committee on Indian Affairs in a business meeting Wednesday, July 29 approved a slightly revised version of S. 383, the Indian Trust Asset Reform Act by Senator Mike Crapo (R, Idaho). Crapo, in comments to the Committee on the bill, noted it is supported by NCAI, ATNI, USET, and

the Intertribal Timber Council, which submitted a letter of support for the concepts in S. 383, and in particular for the Trust Asset Management Plan Demonstration Program set out in Title II of the bill.

In the business meeting, the SCIA’s revisions to the bill were incorporated and the bill was unanimously approved. S. 383’s revisions are principally of a technical and clarifying nature. The basic thrust of Title II of the bill authorizes individual tribes to voluntarily submit management plans for any or all trust assets to the Interior Secretary for approval. The Plans must meet existing laws and treaties and, if approved, would direct how Interior is to manage the specified trust resources. Tribes would be able to take over management under the Plan as well. Title III of the bill directs a report to Congress on eliminating the Office of the Special Trustee and folding its functions back into BIA or a proposed Deputy Secretary charged with overseeing tribal issues throughout the Interior Department.

S. 383, once its explanatory committee report is issued, is eligible for Senate floor consideration, which, while now unscheduled, could potentially occur sometime this fall.

Similar House trust reform legislation (H.R. 812) was introduced February 9, 2015 in the House by Rep. Mike Simpson (R-ID), on which the House Natural Resources Subcommittee on Indian, Insular and Alaska Native Affairs held a hearing April 14, 2015.

10) Senate passes Self-Governance amendments.

On July 7, the Senate unanimously passed S. 286, the Department of the Interior Tribal Self-Governance Act of 2015, to streamline the Interior Department’s self-governance processes for approving compacts and funding agreements, bringing BIA processes more into line with those of the Indian Health Service. Prior to passage,

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the bill was revised with a substitute amendment. Passage happened very quickly with no discussion in the Senate's end-of-day "wrap-up." With Senate passage, the bill was transmitted to the House and referred there to the Committee on Natural Resources. There is no related House-introduced legislation.

11) Barrasso introduces incentivized *Carcieri* fix, prompts withdrawal of "clean" fix.

On July 28, Senate Indian Affairs Committee Chairman John Barrasso (R-WY) introduced the Interior Improvement Act, S. 1879, a bill to override the US Supreme Court's 2009 *Carcieri v. Salazar* decision by reaffirming all previous Secretarial land-into-trust transactions and reaffirming the Interior Secretary's authority under the Indian Reorganization Act to take land into trust for all federally recognized tribes and individual Indians.

In addition to reaffirming those authorities, the bill codifies the current regulatory requirements for getting land into trust and adds application notification and comment timeline requirements. But the bill also adds a preference for land-into-trust proposals that include cooperative agreements with "contiguous" jurisdictions and a requirement that the Secretary consider actions to mitigate the economic impact of taking land into trust on the affected contiguous jurisdiction. A cooperative agreement is not essential for a land-into-trust proposal, nor is the economic impact mitigation consideration to be absolutely determinative, but as a practical matter, the lack of a cooperative agreement (unless the contiguous jurisdiction is found to be acting bad faith) or a mitigation plan could hinder a land-into-trust application. These additional considerations are referred to in the bill as "incentives" for tribes, but the effect is to strengthen the role

of adjoining counties in tribal land-into-trust proposals.

Since the *Carcieri* decision, state and local government opposition has prevented previous "clean" *Carcieri* fix bills from advancing. The United South and Eastern Tribes are reportedly supporting Barrasso's bill. Other support is not clear at this time.

S. 1879 was referred to the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs, and its introduction the day before a Committee business meeting that was to include consideration of Vice Chairman Jon Tester's "clean" *Carcieri* fix bill, S. 732, caused Vice Chairman Tester to withdraw his bill from the SCIA's July 29 mark-up session.

12) Barrasso introduces bill to mandate USFS harvest, prescribed fire levels.

On June 25, Senator John Barrasso (R-WY) introduced S. 1691, the National Forest Ecosystem Improvement Act. The bill would require the Forest Service to perform at least one million acres of logging or vegetation treatments and one million acres of prescribed fires each year. The bill would also shorten National Environmental Policy Act reviews for these activities. The bill has been referred to the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee.

13) House Resources Committee approves Indian Energy bill with biomass demo program.

On September 10, the House Committee on Natural Resources approved Rep. Don Young's (R-AK) legislation aimed at streamlining energy projects on Indian lands, making the bill eligible (once the committee report is issued) for House floor consideration. The bill, H.R. 538, the Native American Energy Act, addresses NEPA and litigation issues for energy projects on Indian lands. It also contains a biomass demonstration program that would mandate the federal government to

enter into demonstration projects that "promote biomass energy production (including biofuel, heat, and electricity generation) on Indian forest land and in nearby communities by providing reliable supplies of woody biomass from Federal land." Specifically, the bill would mandate 4 projects per year between 2016-2024. The Colville Tribe has long been advocating for this biomass demonstration project, which basically tiers off the TFPA program.

The biomass provision of Young's bill is very similar to that in Sen. Barrasso's S. 209, the Indian Tribal Energy Development and Self-Determination Act Amendments of 2015, which was approved by the SCIA February 4, 2015 but the report for which has yet to be issued. ITC wrote a letter of support for Barrasso's very similar bill, S. 2132, in the 113th Congress.

14) ITC to testify on management "lessons" for federal forests.

ITC President Phil Rigdon is scheduled to testify September 29 before the House Natural Resources Subcommittee on Federal Lands for its hearing on "State, Local, and Tribal Approaches to Forest Management: Lessons for Better Management of our Federal Forests." President Rigdon's testimony discusses active multiple use as a key tribal element, and also touches on this summer's destructive wildfires on tribal lands and the need for improved federal funding. As for "lessons" from Indian country that might help National Forests, the testimony suggestions include Anchor Forests, TFPA, management laws that are simpler and more flexible, working more with forest neighbors, and more equitable forest management and wildfire funding. 🌲

Fire Technical Specialist

by James R. Erickson



James R. Erickson

Fire Storm 2015

This was the year that the perfect storm descended upon the Pacific Northwest and Northern California. The perfect storm descended upon California the week of July 31, 2015 and the Northwest the week of August 10, 2015. Severe, extended drought; extreme temperatures; and lightning ignited a series of 15-20 large fires in Northern California and 30-40 large, extreme behavior fires across the Pacific Northwest. Shortage of suppression resources resulted in extreme fire growth and impacts to tribal resources in the Northwest. The North Star fire on the Colville reservation has become the largest fire in Washington state history, just one year after the previous largest state fire occurred, the Carlton complex. When you add in the Tunk fire, the Colville Tribe experienced the two largest fires in their history this year, totaling 384,060 acres. Is this a sign of things to come or just a freak event?

The Warm Springs, Spokane, Flathead, Yakama, Nez Perce and Colville reservations were all impacted by this storm, experiencing the largest recorded fires in their reservation histories. Rough estimates indicate that as of 9/23/2015 approximately 411,407 acres burned across these reservations, including:

<u>Tribes</u>	<u>Acres</u>
Warm Springs	67,207
Spokane	21,000
Flathead	3,200
Yakama	41,000
Nez Perce	6,000
Colville	273,000

These fires expose some important facts pointed out in IFMAT III, that the BIA and Tribes are severely underfunded and understaffed for fire pre-

paredness as compared to the Forest Service. This discrepancy has forced Tribes and agencies to continually reduce staffing due to budget shortfalls. The trend has now reached epidemic proportions where Tribes and agencies no longer have adequate resources to recruit, train and staff the next generation of fire fighters. These fires might have been controlled and kept smaller had adequate local resources been available. It is time to address these funding discrepancies.

This event is unprecedented in modern history and will require special federal appropriations for stabilization and rehabilitation of these fires. Early estimates indicate the need to reforest 79,330 acres just on Northwest reservations. Total rehabilitation costs are projected to exceed \$25 million, more than the total Department of Interior annual rehabilitation (BAER) budget. Tribes are requesting and hope to receive a special supplemental appropriation to cover these critical recovery costs.

Additional funding will also be necessary to support salvage operations to capture as much value as possible for these Tribes. Unfortunately, estimates of timber mortality in the Northwest approach nearly 2 billion board feet. Tribal capacity for timber harvest and timber markets will not support salvage harvest of these enormous amounts. So what happens to these fuels? The reality is that much of this volume will decompose and eventually fall down onsite causing an even greater challenge and fuels risk in the future. These jack-strawed trees will form the loading for an even greater and much more damaging fire in the future. Failure to address these fuels will just pass the buck onto future generations where intense fires could cause irreparable damage to soil and water resources. Loss of soil equates to loss of water storage capacity. Loss of water equates reduced availability of the key life-supporting element. These are potential impacts for which there is no recovery. In the Southwest both the White Mountain

Apache Tribes and Santa Clara Pueblo have experienced just such fires that resulted in tremendous soil loss. Can this same thing happen to your reservation?

The reality is that these fires are likely to be a sign of things to come. More large fires may be the new reality. Trends seem to support this fact. Fire seasons are getting longer and fire size is setting all time records. This provides a clear message that *time is not on our side*. Efforts to restore forest health and resiliency need to occur sooner rather than later. *Repeating what has got us here is not going to get us out of this predicament*. We need to change our ways. *Treating more acres at a larger scale, more quickly is our best strategy*. Fire has shown us its ugly head and won. We must live with fire, work with fire, and utilize fire to our advantage. How do we want to influence fire; let it happen to us or manage and work with fire to reach desirable outcomes? Managing wildfires is the new paradigm.

Getting desirable results will take new thinking. How will Indian country deal with this challenge? The last two ITC symposiums have broached the topic of incorporating fire into our resource management plans by engaging six different Tribes to share how they plan to incorporate fire into their future management strategies. One Tribe who has bravely engaged fire as a friend is the San Carlos Apache Tribe in Arizona, hosts of the next Intertribal Timber symposium April 4-7, 2016. A key topic of this symposium will be a panel sharing additional three Tribes' fire management strategies coupled with a field trip to witness how San Carlos uses fire to restore and maintain healthy, resilient forest and woodland ecosystems. I hope you will join us for this historic event.

In the mean time begin the discussion of how your Tribe and region will embrace fire in this new role to manage your resources. Manage fire or it will manage you. 🌲

Education Committee

by Orvie Danzuka, Chairman



Orvie Danzuka

The Education Committee has finalized dates for the 2016 Truman Picard Scholarship Announcement. The Deadline this year is January 11, 2016. If you are interested,

or know someone interested, please encourage them to submit an application before the application deadline. Visit the ITC website or call the ITC office for more information. In addition, announcements will be sent out to tribes and agencies. Please help yourself by beginning the process early so that you give yourself ample time to present your best depiction of yourself. I know Laura and Monica will appreciate the effort because they won't have so many applications to screen before sending on to the selection committee.

The Truman Picard Scholarship is offered annually to Native Americans pursuing higher education in the field of natural resources. The amounts awarded are \$2,000 for high school recipients and \$2,500 for undergraduate and graduate recipients.

Scholarship applicants will be rated on five criteria: application letter, resume, academic merit, reference letters, and financial need. The

application letter needs to address the students' interest in natural resources as well as their commitment to their education, community and culture. Please do not sell yourself short, this scholarship is very competitive and finding references who can detail your accomplishments is very important.

There will be a Scholarship Selection Committee who will review the applicants and grade them on the above criteria. It is important for all applicants to understand that the awards are not based on any political influence or by the amount a tribe participates with ITC. Picard Scholarships are all based on the merits of the students and the potential they will bring to Indian country natural resources.

Individuals selected for an ITC scholarship who declare an eligible major at Oregon State University, Northern Arizona University, Salish Kootenai College or University of Washington will receive matching funds from those respective universities. The Education Committee will be sending out letters to other schools in hopes that they will enter into similar agreements.

The committee would like to reach out to past scholarship recipients to find out where you are and what you are currently doing. We will be sending out a short form and we hope you will consent to a brief article in our newsletter.

We would like to welcome new Education Committee members Steve McDonald and Talya Holliday as new members. We are always open to new members to continue on with the success of the committee and recognize current and past recipients.

The current members are very involved in other committees, so we had trouble finding a new chair for the recently vacated chair of the Awards Committee. In light of that we would like to invite any interested individuals to attend our quarterly board meetings and join us as we move forward.

To any and all interested potential scholarship recipients please spend adequate time preparing your application and ask for feedback from trusted individuals.

A new ITC exhibit booth will be unveiled at the next SAF meeting in Baton Rouge, LA November 3-7, 2015 and another opportunity to see the display is at AISES in Phoenix November 18-22, 2015. Stop by and see the new display. Thanks to Laura for the excellent work on the display and thanks also to Don for setting up at the respective events and distributing information.

You can get more information by calling the ITC office or visiting the website. 

ITC Tribal Forest Protection Act Update

The Intertribal Timber Council continues to work with the Forest Service to identify the need for additional topic specific webinars and regional workshops; monitor the progress of newly initiated TFPA projects; identify and address technical assistance needs; and identify funding mechanisms and opportunities to support TFPA implementation.

This fall we will conduct a tribal scoping webinar to introduce TFPA concepts to new Tribes and determine the degree of interest within various regions of the country (Lake States/Northeast, California, Western Oregon and Washington). Based upon these results we will host at least one more regional TFPA workshop tailored to

the specific needs of Tribes within the selected region. Additional workshops and webinars will be conducted as funds become available.

Interested Tribes should contact Jim Erickson at (509) 633-1067 or jim.erickson@couleedam.net to communicate your interest in participating. 



Intertribal Timber Council

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Scholarship Announcement For Native American/Alaskan Natural Resource Students

Deadline: January 11, 2016, 5:00 p.m. PST

Award: \$2,500 for college students (number of awards varies per year)
\$2,000 for graduating senior high school students

Purpose: The **Truman D. Picard Scholarship Program** is dedicated to the support of Native American students pursuing a higher education in Natural Resources.

Required Material: The Education Selection Committee will review and rank only those applicants who completely address each area. Please be specific. Incomplete applications will not be considered.

- 1. Letter of Application:** The letter must include your name, permanent mailing address, email address if available, and phone number. It should be a maximum of two pages in length, and discuss the following:
 - a. Interest in natural resources.
 - b. Commitment to education, community and your culture.
 - c. Financial need. Students must complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) and attach the Student Aid Report or have the report sent to the ITC office. If it has not been completed, send last year's report.
- 2. Resume**
- 3. Three signed letters of reference,** on letterhead and dated within the last six months.
- 4. Evidence of validated enrollment** in a federally recognized tribe or Alaska Native Corporation, as established by the U. S. Government. A photocopy of your enrollment card, front and back, or Certificate of Indian Blood (CIB) will suffice.
- 5. Transcripts:** ALL students must include transcripts.
 - High school students must also provide documented proof of acceptance to an institution of higher education and a review of college class schedule to verify major before a check is released.
 - College students must also provide proof of their declared major.

All requested information MUST be received by the close of business (5:00 p.m. PST) **January 11, 2016**, for consideration. For more information, please visit our website www.itcnet.org. Fax (503-282-1274) and e-mail (itc1@teleport.com) submissions are acceptable as long as we receive them by 5:00 p.m. January 11, 2016, and the original is mailed and postmarked by January 11, 2016.

Inquiries and applications should be directed to the Intertribal Timber Council office:

ATTN: EDUCATION COMMITTEE
INTERTRIBAL TIMBER COUNCIL
1112 N. E. 21st Avenue, Suite 4
Portland, Oregon 97232-2114
(503) 282-4296

The Intertribal Timber Council (ITC) has cooperative financial aid agreements with the University of Washington, Oregon State University, Salish Kootenai College, Northern Arizona University and Yale University. Recipients of the ITC Truman Picard Scholarship are eligible to receive additional scholarships including tuition waivers, if attending one of these colleges. For more information, visit the ITC website or contact the colleges directly.

TRUMAN D. PICARD (1946-1986)

To honor Truman D. Picard the Intertribal Timber Council (ITC) established a scholarship program in his name. Truman served on the ITC Board of Directors from 1982 to 1985. While working for the Bureau of Indian Affairs, Colville Agency (Nespelem, Washington), in presales he attended the Forest Engineering Institute at Oregon State University becoming one of the first people from the agency to complete this program. In 1977, Truman transferred to the Colville Tribal Forestry organization taking a position as Supervisory Forest Technician in charge of woods operations. Later he was promoted to Assistant Supervisor of Forestry Operations.

Because of his drive and determination to complete his education Truman returned to Oregon State University earning a Bachelor of Science Degree in Forest Management.

Upon his return from college, he was appointed Director of Colville Tribal Forestry. His work for the Tribe will always be remembered by his individual efforts to bring BIA Forestry and Colville Tribal Forestry together in a joint effort to improve the level of Forest Management on the reservation – truly a lasting legacy.

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E-mail: itc1@teleport.com • www.itcnet.org



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1112 NE 21st Avenue, Suite 4
Portland, Oregon 97232

First Class
