



INTERTRIBAL TIMBER COUNCIL TIMBER NOTES

Spring ~ 2023



Howard Teasley, Jr.

SYMPOSIUM COMMITTEE

REGISTER NOW FOR THE 2023 ITC SYMPOSIUM!

The Intertribal Timber Council (ITC) family would like to invite you to the Land of 10,000 Lakes, Minnesota and the location of terminus or beginning of the Mississippi River. We are very excited to have the 46th Annual National Indian Timber Symposium to be held **June 12-15, 2023**, at The Northern Lights Casino, Hotel & Event Center in Walker, MN, hosted by the Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe. The theme of this year's symposium is "*Landscape: The Forest Through the Trees.*"

Online registration closes June 6. Visit the event website for details: <https://www.eventsquid.com/event/19564>. You can now plan to make the necessary reserva-

tions for your stay, vehicles, and activities. Car Rentals should be reserved in advance. Check office hours to ensure you will be able to pick up and drop off around your flight times. Visit the event website for closest airports and lodging information. Please purchase guest tickets for the Tuesday Luncheon and Thursday Awards Banquet online by June 6. No onsite sales will be available.

Fees for the optional **Monday, June 12 Pre-Symposium Workshops** directly fund the Intertribal Timber Council's Truman D. Picard Scholarship, dedicated to the support of Native American students pursuing a higher education in Natural Resources. All workshops are provided with refreshments and lunches. Please dress appropriately for field workshops.

Pre-Symposium Workshop 1: USDA-NRCS Funding & Opportunities. Private lands opportunities for Indian Country. Register online by June 6. Maximum attendees 50.

Pre-Symposium Workshop 2: Wildland Fire. This workshop will provide an opportunity to dialog with the leadership of the wildland fire community and experience local active management practices. Participants will hear directly from local tribal practitioners, partners and learn about the new developments and challenges in wildland fire management. Register online by June 6. Maximum attendees 50.

Pre-Symposium Workshop 3: Crafting Rice Knockers. Harvesting wild rice is a practice enjoyed by the Leech Lake Band every August and September as it ripens. Traditional ricing practice involves two people in a canoe. One person uses a ricing pole to maneuver the canoe throughout the rice beds. The other person uses two cedar sticks to "knock" the rice from the plant into the canoe with sticks called knockers. Lunch (provided). Register online by June 6. Maximum attendees 30.

Pre-Symposium Workshop 4: Tour of Mississippi Headwaters at Lake Itasca. The Mississippi River is the backbone of the Leech Lake Reservation. This majestic river's headwaters are in northern Minnesota at the Itasca State Park. We invite you on a field trip to visit the park and see where the river starts at Lake Itasca. Lunch (provided). Register online by June 6. Maximum attendees 50.

Pre-Symposium Workshop 5:
(Continued on page 3)

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Symposium Committee	1
President's Message	2
Wildland Fire Technical Specialist . .	5
Awards Committee.	6
Legislative Update	7
Operations Committee.	9
Education Committee	9
BIA Forestry and Wildland Fire Management	10

President's Message

by Cody Desautel



Cody Desautel

I hope 2023 is off to a good start for everyone. We look forward to spring, which is a very important time for tribal people. We continue to make slow and steady progress on a number of critical and urgent projects and legislation. For this report I will focus on Farm Bill, IFMAT report and implementation, expansion of Wildfire Crisis project areas, and Wildfire commission.

We continue to work with intertribal organizations and congressional staff on exploring opportunities to expand tribal authorities on adjacent federal land in the next Farm Bill. With reorganization in the House and Senate complete, Congress is defining their legislative priorities. ITC's priorities remain consistent, focused on making pilot authorities permanent, resolving the Good Neighbor issue, and expanding and defining Tribal co-stewardship and co-management on federal land. Coordination will be important over the next 6 months to ensure draft farm bill language includes those tribal priorities. We will continue to provide updates as we make progress, and welcome comments or concerns we should be aware of from our member tribes.

The fourth Indian Forest Manage-

ment Assessment is scheduled to be presented to Congress in April, with the final report available for the Symposium in June. I want to take this opportunity to thank the IFMAT team for all their work and dedication over past few years. I would also like to thank the tribes that participated and hosted the IFMAT team. This is truly a monumental task for both the team and tribes they visit, and the information is critical to direct outreach and communicate tribal needs over the decade between reports. With conclusion of the report coming soon we are starting to move our focus to the IFMAT implementation plan. Recognizing all the hard work and valuable information that the report contains, ITC recognizes the importance of using information to push for positive change for Tribes. We also recognize that the list of challenges we face seem to be ever growing. I'm looking forward to hearing our member tribes' perspectives on the report at the symposium, and feedback and recommendations they have for implementation.

In January the Forest Service announced expansion of the Wildfire Crisis strategy to include 11 new landscapes. These landscapes were scattered across seven states, and include national forests adjacent to many tribal lands. With significant investments in both funding and staffing in these areas Tribes have an opportunity to include tribal goals in the restoration efforts. We continue to work with USFS to facilitate information sharing, coordination between Tribes and National Forests, and as technical support for either Tribes or Forest Service staff that may have questions. A link to the 2023 "Confronting the Wildfire Crisis" report is available below.

https://www.fs.usda.gov/sites/default/files/fs_media/fs_document/WCS-Second-Landscapes.pdf

The Wildland Fire Mitigation and Management Commission is more than half way through the 12 month timeline we were provided by Congress. Many of the workgroups are preparing to finalize recommendations for the full report to Congress this fall. It has been a challenge trying to divide the issues between the workgroups. As many of you know wildfire is complicated, and many things are interrelated and impacts are seen across a variety of functional areas. However, I have been incredibly impressed with the team DOI, USDA, and FEMA pulled together to find solutions to many longstanding issues. The individuals are experts in their respective fields, and come from a diverse set of backgrounds that lead to comprehensive discussions and recommendations about the challenges we face. Bill Tripp of Karuk, and Gary Jackson of Cow Creek serve as the Tribal representatives, and are doing an amazing



Photo of Moses Mountain 2015 Northstar

(Continued on page 3)

President's Message

by Cody Desautel

(Continued from Page 2)

job representing Tribes and providing that much needed tribal voice in these conversations.

As a reminder of why this work is so important I wanted to share an example from Colville. I included pictures from the Northstar fire in 2015, and a more recent picture from the Northstar fire scar in 2022. After 7 years there is very little recovery. It is critical that restoration work happen before these



Photo of Moses Mountain 2022 post Northstar

catastrophic wildfires to avoid the resource damage and recovery timelines many of us have experienced.

The symposium will be here before we know it. As always the symposium committee has pulled together a great agenda. I'm excited to see the amazing work the Leech Lake Band is doing both on their reservation, and on adjacent federal land. I hope to see many of you in June.



Symposium Committee

by Howard Teasley, Jr.

(Continued from Page 1)

Fishing Trip on Leech Lake.

Each boat will have a captain/guide. Cash gratuities appreciated. If enough fish are caught there may be an opportunity to help clean fish following the trip. All tackle and poles provided. Fishing license information required by the registration deadline. Lunch (provided). Register online by May 19. Maximum attendees 35.

The Symposium Officially Begins, and Registration for all attendees starts at 4:00 pm, and runs until 7:00 pm at the Northern Lights Casino Event Center. Check in and pick up your name tag and symposium materials.

Host Tribe Ice Breaker from 5:00 pm to 7:00 pm at the Northern Lights Casino Event Center. Enjoy hors d'oeuvres and mingle with attendees. Guests welcome. Comedian Rob Fairbanks "Rez Reporter" from Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe at 6:00 pm.

Tuesday, June 13: Registration at the Northern Lights Casino Event Center, Exhibits, and the Raffle begin at 7:00 am. The symposium

officially starts at 8:00 am with the **Opening Ceremony** – Invocation, Posting of the Colors, and Welcomes. **Keynote** by Levi Brown, Retired Environmental Director, LLBO. **Featured Guest Speaker Video Message** from Amy Kobuchar, Senator for Minnesota, will present next. The morning Panel will present **Land Base and the Return of Tribal Ancestral Lands**. Followed by the **ITC Luncheon** and **Panel: IFMAT-IV – It's Not Just Another Report**. Ending with the **Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe Host Presentation**. This will conclude the afternoon sessions and the evening events will start at 6:00 pm with the **Host Tribe Welcome Dinner** at the Onigum Community Center

Wednesday, June 14: Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe Tribal Tour: Bus loading from 7:30 am - 8:00 am at Northern Lights Casino Event Center. Each stop will allow for 2 hours, including driving time to get to the next sites. Lunch (provided) at Knutzen Dam. Guests welcome. **Stop 1:** Snowshoe Hare Habitat Restoration Tribal Forest Protection Act (TFPA) Pilot Proj-

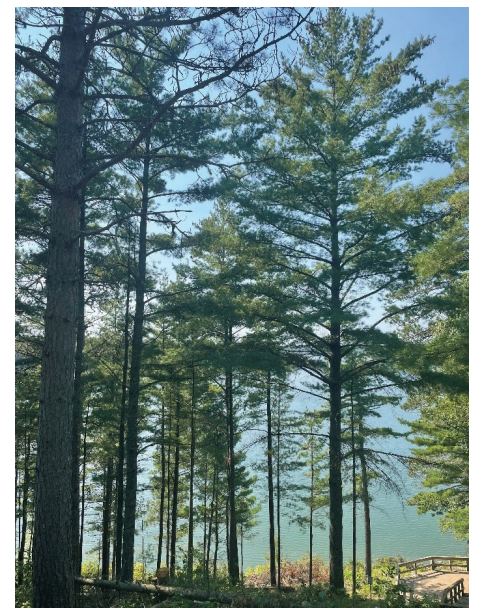


Photo of Lake Itasca at Itasca State Park

ect. **Stop 2:** Multiple TFPA site for Red Pine Plantation Ecosystem Restoration and Fire Ecology Restoration. **Stop 3:** Lydick Prescribed Burn, Fire Restoration TFPA Site. **Stop 4:** RTRL Sand Plains Pine Project Monitoring

After the tour, there will be a **General Membership Meeting** at Northern Lights Casino Event Center, which will be an open fo-

(Continued on page 4)

Symposium Committee

by Howard Teasley, Jr.

(Continued from page 3)

rum with topics of discussion given later. This will also give member Tribes the opportunity to communicate with the ITC Board of Directors about their concerns.

Thursday, June 15: The day's activities will start at 8:00 am with the **ITC President's Report**, then the **Updates:** from Department of Interior Office of Wildland Fire, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Legislative, and U.S. Forest Service Office of Tribal Relations. Immediately following the Updates our ITC Workshops will start simultaneously at 10:30 am and end at 4:15 pm:

Workshop 1: Cross-Boundary Shared Stewardship Opportunities. Opportunities to work across agencies to achieve successes are as abundant as ever. This workshop will highlight some of these opportunities for collaborative inter-agency work to restore indigenous forest management.

Workshop 2: Forest Technology Applications and Their Use for Assessing Fire Risk Across a Landscape. Developments in landscape technology applications and their use for assessing fire risk, avoided financial costs, and inventory resources in forested and woodland environments.

Workshop 3: Indian Trust Asset Reform Act (ITARA). ITARA overview, requirements, application, and development of an Indian Trust Asset Management Plan (ITAMP).

Following the workshops there will be the **Annual ITC Business Meeting** at the Northern Lights Casino Event Center: Ballroom.

The 46th Annual National Intertribal Timber Symposium will con-

clude with our **Annual Awards Banquet** to honor and recognize the recipients of any regional or national Earle Wilcox Awards, and the recipients of the Truman D. Picard Scholarship. And finally, the winners of the various Education Committee Raffle prizes will be presented at this time.

Come and visit Minnesota! The Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe and Intertribal Timber Council will see you in May.



Photo of Lake Itasca at Itasca State Park

Visit our website for Symposium information: www.itcnet.org.

Donation of raffle items for the symposium. Through your generous donations, the ITC generated \$7,184 at the 2022 symposium. All the funds go towards the ITC Truman D. Picard Scholarship. This scholarship supports Native American students seeking college degrees in the field of natural resources. To date, the ITC has awarded \$1,097,000 in scholarships to 542 native students.

Feel free to bring your gifts to the ITC Symposium in Fairbanks, or

you may send your gifts to:

John Johnson, Property Manager

Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe

Attn: ITC Symposium Raffle

16126 John Moose Dr.

Cass Lake, MN 56633

To help the ITC Education Committee catalog your donated items, please provide the following information:

- A brief description of the item.
- Estimated value of the item (information desired but not required).
- Donated by (i.e., Tribe, enterprise, individual, etc.).
- Donor's name and address.

This information will help the Committee give credit to the correct donors and send letters of appreciation after the symposium. Donations are tax deductible and receipts are available upon request.

Help: Intertribal Timber council is a nonprofit organization and is always looking for donations and/or sponsorships during the Annual Timber Symposium. ITC will accept banquet sponsorships that can be of any amount. If a Tribe or business is interested in donating, please contact ITC directly.

Here are the future Symposium dates for planning purposes:

2024 – 47th Annual National Indian Timber Symposium hosted by **Eastern Band of Cherokee**, Cherokee, NC

2025 – 48th Annual National Indian Timber Symposium hosted by **Confederated Salish & Kootenai Tribes**, MT

(Continued on page 5)

Symposium Committee

by Howard Teasley, Jr.

(Continued from Page 4)

Searching for a Host Tribe: Each year, the member tribes of Intertribal Timber Council vote by ballot and choose a future site for a tribe wanting to host the event. This occurs during the Annual Business Meeting on Thursday, June 15, 2023, after the Symposium workshops. During the meeting, there is an **Election of Board Members** and a decision on the next location.

2026 – 49th Annual National Indian Timber Symposium is open for a tribe wanting to highlight their reservation area, tribal organization, natural resources, and resort casino. ITC has developed a planning document, which outlines every aspect of hosting, both in the forefront and behind the scenes. This will answer any questions and help weigh in on a tribe's decision. Is your Tribe interested? Please

contact us.

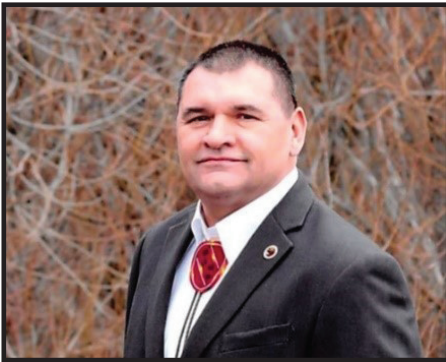
Li'loyca Godnim Ha'awtnin ee was. Qe'ciyew'yew.

If you are not on the ITC symposium mailing list and would like to receive the annual symposium agenda in the mail, please contact the ITC Office by email at monica@itcnet.org.



Wildland Fire Technical Specialist

by Jim Durglo



Jim Durglo

The ITC continues to be engaged in the Wildland Fire Leadership Council (WFLC) and the National Wildfire Coordinating Group (NWCG). Here are some topics being discussed in those circles.

Cohesive Strategy Refresh: Mike Zupko, Executive Director of WFLC reports that The Refresh has been approved by all sitting WFLC members and is undergoing final edits and compliance reviews. WFLC has been intentional with the timing for the rollout. A robust communications strategy for the rollout is being developed for both short- and long-term integration. The final draft of the Refresh will be considered complete when the Wildfire Commission finalizes their recommendations around CS

then a final version for approval by WFLC members will be distributed.

Proposed NWCG Prescribed Fire Practitioners Qualifications Alternative Pathway: A new, voluntary, Prescribed Fire Practitioner Qualifications Pathway is being developed for NWCG review and consideration by the three WFLC Regions and the National Coalition of Prescribed Fire Councils. This new pathway would provide a means for current and potential prescribed fire practitioners from all entities, including federal, state, and local agencies, Tribes, NGOs, contractors, and private landowners, to be able to obtain nationally recognized prescribed fire practitioner certifications without having to obtain wildfire suppression assignments. This proposal will not change or impact on the current NWCG Prescribed Burn Boss (RXB) qualifications process. Stay tuned for more on this issue.

The Wildfire Resilience Roadmap: The Nature Conservancy with the Aspen Institute have hosted a series of workshops around the nation to gather information about issues and challenges associated



Photo of Rx Burning Operation courtesy of CSKT Forestry Department, Division of Fire

with wildland fire management. As a result, they are publishing a report that centers around eight themes with built in recommendations. An example of a specific challenge was the non-federal funding match requirement for FEMA grants used for wildfire recovery. The cost share match requirement makes application nearly impossible for small communities. As a result, the TNC/Aspen Institute advocated for a waiver of the match requirement in some cases. The fi-

(Continued on page 6)

Wildland Fire Technical Specialist

by Jim Durglo

(Continued from page 5)

nal report should be available soon. Just to note —many ITC members have participated in one or more of the workshops.

True Cost of Wildfire in the Western U.S. Report: This was prepared for the Western Forestry Leadership Coalition by Spatial Informatics Group, LLC with support from a number of folks from the Wildland Fire Leadership Council. This report aims to convey information on the full range of costs associated with wildland fire in the Western United States to inform leaders and policymakers as they work to improve wildfire response and mitigation.

This report breaks down costs into three high-level categories: Direct Costs, which are incurred

directly during an incident; **Indirect Costs — Losses**, which are incurred after an incident but attributable to it; and **Indirect Costs — Mitigation Investments**, which represent expenditures that would reduce the incidence of and damage from future catastrophic fire. Under each of these three categories, subcategories of costs are given. A detailed discussion outlines why each matter is, how it is quantified, how researchers have addressed it, and what types of data exist, if any, to track it. As this section makes clear, data availability is highly inconsistent and/or lacking for many cost categories. Case studies of eight major western wildfires are used to illustrate the variety of wildfire cost types. This report is available upon request.

Implementation of Complex In-

cident Management (CIM): The NWCG with support from the National Multi-Agency Coordinating Group (NMAC) and others are pushing for a nationwide and systemwide transition plan with *the intent of full* CIM implementation by April 2024. This means that they will be transitioning away from Type 1 and Type 2 incident management team configuration and into CIM. To learn more about the transition to CIM visit the NWCG website at: <https://us15.campaign-archive.com/?u=f6ef65083afb95841916d1a7f&iid=09a86db204>



Awards Committee

by Robin Harkins



Robin Harkins

2023 EARLE R. WILCOX AWARDS RECIPIENTS SELECTED

The ITC Awards Committee met virtually in mid-February during the ITC Board meetings to review the applications received for the Earle R. Wilcox Memorial Awards. Committee members were provided with the submitted nomination packages in late January and were able to evaluate and score them independently before the committee meeting. Scores were tallied by Awards Committee Chairperson Robin Harkins and each nomination was discussed by the group. The accomplishments of your peers in Indian Forestry continue to be impressive.

Thank you to the individuals who coordinated application packets for their peers and the committee members who took the time to re-

view and provide input on award recipients.

Award recipients will be announced and recognized during the 46th Annual National Indian Timber Symposium hosted by the Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe in Walker, MN June 12-15, 2023. Hope you can join ITC in-person to recognize the outstanding accomplishments of the recipients.



Legislative Update

by Matt Hill



Matt Hill

ITC PROVIDES CONGRESSIONAL TESTIMONY

On March 8 and 9, ITC Vice-President Phil Rigdon testified before two separate committees. First, Mr. Rigdon appeared before the House Natural Resources Committee, Subcommittee on Federal Lands. The oversight hearing was titled “Promoting Conservation with a Purpose on America’s Federal Lands and Forests” and other witnesses included representatives from the Utah Department of Natural Resources, Board of Carbon County (Wyoming) Commissioners, and a University of California law professor.

Mr. Rigdon’s testimony focused on how tribal forest’s view and achieve “conservation” goals. Rigdon

spoke to the relative flexibility of tribal land management designations, compared to “single use” designations on non-tribal federal lands. “[Tribal] accountability leads to the optimal balance of competing needs. I believe this ultimately leads to better conservation of all resources, whether it be wildlife habitat, traditional medicines and foods, or timber,” said Rigdon. Regarding the threat of wildfire to conservation values, Rigdon told the Subcommittee: “Wildfire is challenging some of the old concepts and tools of conservation. In Indian Country, we are tackling that head-on. We respond quickly to forest health challenges. We fight fires aggressively when they threaten resources, but we also use prescribed fire aggressively when circumstances allow it. After fires, we prevent waste by utilizing dead trees and protecting the remaining resources from the risk of re-burn.”

Rigdon was asked several questions by subcommittee members, including the type of work being done by tribes on federal lands, the importance of maintaining logging/manufacturing infrastructure and the ITC’s position on Good Neighbor Authority expansi-

on (to better include tribes in that program).

On March 9, Rigdon testified on behalf of the ITC before the House Interior Appropriations Subcommittee during its annual “tribal witness days.” Rigdon’s formal testimony noted that: Indian forest management creates \$3 for every \$1 of investment, employs nearly 20,000 people, and that 80% of all the timber produced from Department of Interior lands come from Indian forests.

Rigdon reminded the Subcommittee that the IFMAT report will fully document the finding inequity between BIA and other federal forest lands. In fact, BIA Forestry funding, in real terms, has declined 28% over the last 30 years. During this 30-year period Indian forest trust lands have increased from 15.6 million acres to 19.3 million acres.

Rigdon urged the subcommittee to take real action to address this funding inequity, which would require an additional \$96 million appropriated to BIA Forestry and an additional \$46 million in fire preparedness funding.

Finally, Rigdon called on Congress to work with the Department of Interior to finally address the tribal firefighter pay inequity issue (see more in discussion of FY24 budget).

Good Neighbor Legislation Introduced: A bipartisan group of U.S. senators and congressmen have introduced legislation to fully extend eligibility for the Good Neighbor Authority (GNA) program for federal forest restoration and management projects to Tribes and counties as well as increase opportunities for cross-boundary

(Continued on page 8)

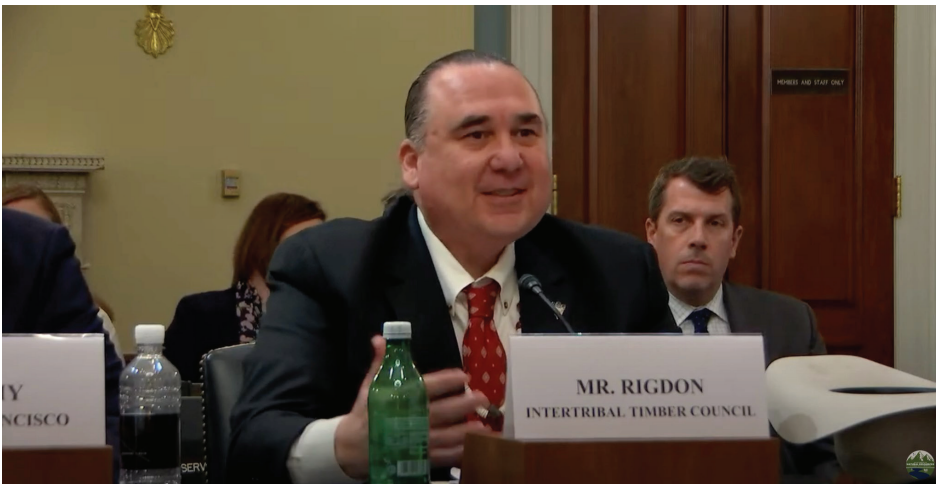


Photo of Phil Rigdon providing testimony before the House Committee on Natural Resources Federal Land Subcommittee Hearing on “Conservation with a Purpose on America’s Federal Lands and Forests” March 8, 2023

Legislative Update

by Matt Hill

(Continued from page 7)

restoration. U.S. Senator Jim Risch (R-Idaho), Congressman Russ Fulcher (R-Idaho), and Congresswoman Marie Gluesenkamp Perez (D-Wash.) sponsored the *Treating Tribes and Counties as Good Neighbors Act*

The *Treating Tribes and Counties as Good Neighbors Act* has received support from Governor of Idaho Brad Little, National Association of Counties, Intertribal Timber Council, Idaho Forest Group, Boone and Crockett Club, Mule Deer Foundation, National Association of State Foresters.

The GNA program has allowed the U.S. Forest Service to partner with states on federal forest restoration and management projects to improve wildlife habitats, enhance watersheds, and reduce wildfire risks. In the 2018 Farm Bill, Congress amended GNA to make Tribes and Counties eligible to enter into Good Neighbor Agreements. However, Tribes and Counties were not afforded the same authority as states to retain GNA project receipts to reinvest in conservation, reducing a significant incentive to partner on forest management projects.

Additionally, the 2018 Farm Bill removed the ability for restoration services to take place off of federal lands. This means adjacent state, tribal, county, and other land that is essential to the health and productivity of National Forests can no longer be restored as comprehensive landscapes.

The *Treating Tribes and Counties as Good Neighbors Act* provides Tribes and Counties with the ability to reinvest receipts in authorized restoration and enables all GNA partners to perform restoration not just on federal lands, but also on lands approved under the project's

Good Neighbor Agreement. The Good Neighbor Authority program is expected to be reauthorized in the upcoming 2023 Farm Bill.

Biden Administration's FY 24 Budget Proposal: On March 9, the Biden Administration released its proposed budget for Fiscal Year 2024. This is just a proposal and Congress ultimately determines the level of appropriation for federal programs and, with a Republican House, may differ significantly from the Administration's proposal.

The Administration proposes to fund BIA Forestry at \$68.5 million — an increase of \$2.5 million over the FY23 enacted amount. Under “legislative proposals” (which would require congressional action) the Department proposes a fix for the tribal firefighter inequity issue:

“Wildland Firefighting Workforce—The President’s 2024 Budget proposes legislation and funding to implement significant reforms to increase the Nation’s investment in the wildland fire management workforce. The cornerstone of these long-term reforms is a permanent increase in pay. The Administration proposes legislation to establish a special base rate salary table for wildland firefighters, create a new premium pay category that provides some additional compensation for all hours a wildland fire responder is mobilized on an incident, and establish a streamlined pay cap that provides waiver authority to the Secretary using specific criteria. The budget supports this legislative proposal with funding for these Federal pay reforms and similar pay increases for Tribal personnel. These proposals build upon the historic reforms in BIL to ensure wildland fire personnel receive

the enhanced support they need to meet evolving mission demands as both the frequency and intensity of catastrophic wildfires are expected to continue to increase due to climate change.”

Also included under “legislative proposals”, DOI proposes to include the National Park Service and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in Good Neighbor and Stewardship Contracting authorities.

The Administration's proposed budget states that it (generally) strengthens Tribal Nations by requesting:

- \$1.6 billion for Indian education programs and school construction, an increase of \$209.2 million above FY 2023, to provide a strong educational foundation for Indigenous children to succeed. An additional \$27.5 million will expand grant awards for Tribal Native language revitalization programs, which are imperative to restore generational continuity and Tribal culture, and strengthen Tribal sovereignty;
- \$717.1 million for public safety and justice at the Bureau of Indian Affairs, an increase of \$85.8 million above FY 2023. This includes \$316.3 million for criminal investigations and police services programs, an increase of \$42.2 million;
- \$12 million for the creation of a new Tribal Land and Water Conservation Fund land acquisition program, pending government-to-government consultation, to further enhance the ability of Tribes to promote conservation and recreation, support Tribal sovereignty and self-determination, and provide another important tool to increase opportunities for Tribal co-stewardship.



Operations Committee

by Tony Incashola, Jr.



Tony Incashola, Jr.

Happy Spring! The Operations Committee meeting virtually held Wednesday February 15, 2023. We had participation from multiple tribes, ITC, and BIA representatives. There are a few updates to share.

IFMAT IV: The Indian Forest Management Assessment Report is approaching a final draft version. The ITC IFMAT oversight committee has provided comments on the draft IFMAT IV report and final edits are being made for final review. The IFMAT team is expecting the final version to be ready for release before the June

ITC Symposium where a panel discussion is scheduled. ITC has put together an IFMAT implementation team that will help develop strategies to release information on findings outlined in the report. The team will also discuss how to coordinate with administration to implement the recommendations outlined in the report.

Workforce Development Coordinator: ITC has secured funding for the Workforce development coordinator through USFS and BIA fire. The position will be housed at Salish Kootenai College. This position will be tasked with implementing and coordinating the ITC Workforce strategic plan. The workforce coordinator would update the strategic plan with current timelines and begin with implementation. If your tribe is interested in more, please see ITC website to download the strategic plan.

Bipartisan Infrastructure Bill: BIA is taking BIL project proposals for funding opportunity. FY2023 funding is expected to be \$10 million for BIA projects. If you did

not receive notice or developed a late proposal, they could still be funded as an August funding batch is anticipated. For more information, please see the ITC website or contact your BIA regional office.

New Wildland Firefighter pay: The Department of Interior has informed ITC they are planning to request consultation with tribes on wildland firefighter pay. Consultation on how to develop a method to accurately account for Tribal wildland firefighter salaries and how to identify additional funding needs. There has been no direct resolve to the issue but ITC continues to work with Office of wildland Fire and Department of Interior to remedy the language in the Bipartisan Infrastructure Bill under section 40803(d)(4)(b) where it authorizes supplemental salary increases for wildland fire fighters. This language included all federal employed fire fighters but does not include language for P.L. 638 Tribal firefighters which are held to the same training and qualification standards.



Education Committee

by Nicole Stiffarm



Nicole Stiffarm

Happy Springtime! The Education Committee met virtually in February. We are excited to share that the

Truman Picard Scholarship fund has received a generous donation of \$20,000.00 from Green Diamond Resource Company! We are extremely grateful for their generosity as it will increase our ability to fund very deserving tribal students, thank you Green Diamond!

We at ITC are working to increase our student engagement at each Symposium location going forward. We plan to pilot this idea at the upcoming Symposium in Walker, MN with forestry students from Leech Lake Tribal College. We will be inviting a few of them

to the symposium to get to know the ITC family.

In preparation for the next meeting scheduled in April, volunteers from the committee signed up to review this year's Truman Picard Scholarship applications. We are very grateful to each of them for their help. The 2023 Truman Picard Scholarship recipients will be listed in the next newsletter. A quick reminder; we will be holding the raffle during the Symposium in June. 100% of the proceeds go to the Truman Picard Scholarship, we hope to see you there!



BIA Forestry and Wildland Fire Management

by Peter Wakeland



Peter Wakeland

PLANNING AND PRIORITIES

Communication: If there is anything that you would like to discuss with the Chief Forester, please feel free to call at 514-294-0431, or send an email or video call invite to peter.wakeland@bia.gov.

Policy: Several Manual Chapters are scheduled to be released this year including a few that only require format updates. The Manual Chapters scheduled for release this year include:

- Forestry, 53 IAM 1, Policies, Authorities and Responsibilities
- Forestry, 53 IAM 3, Harvest of Forest Products
- Forestry, 53 IAM 7, Forest Trespass
- Forestry, 53 IAM 8, Inventory & Monitoring
- Forestry, 53 IAM 9, Silviculture

Staff continue to work with the Office of the Solicitor on the National Policy Memorandums for Direct Pay Authority and Forest Management Deductions. This may take some time.

Budget / Lidar: We received the full FY2023 Forestry budget in March and are working with the

Regions to get the funds distributed to the field units as soon as possible. The FY2023 Forestry Projects Budget includes \$1,000,000 in additional funds for Light Detection and Ranging (Lidar). Tribes wishing to conduct Lidar projects should contact their Regional Forester to submit a project proposal.

Pathways: We have three Pathways students graduating and looking for permanent jobs. If Tribes are interested in hiring one of them, please contact Makenzie Neal; mackenzie.neal@bia.gov; or Weston Cain; weston.cain@bia.gov.

Ecosystem Restoration: For FY 2023, BIA Forestry received \$660,000 for tribal greenhouses; \$700,000 for Ecosystem Restoration including post-fire restoration; \$563,000 for BLM GN projects; \$800,000 for GN and TFPA. Forestry has been coordinating with the FS on greenhouse funding (combined efforts).

Funding for Portable Infrastructure Projects: We anticipate another round of funding requests for Portable Infrastructure projects after the FY2023 budget is passed. Notice will be provided by your Regional Offices. Examples of Portable Infrastructure are small sawmills, chippers, pelletizers, firewood processors, and equipment needed to support the operations. Past proposals have generally been capped at \$250,000. In some cases, Tribes have received additional funding in out-years to expand and improve their operations.

Tribes are encouraged to evaluate how portable infrastructure might be of benefit in managing tribal forests and creating markets for their products. Project proposals are easy to put together, and Tribes may request a project proposal

template from BIA Forestry.

For more information, please contact Pete Wakeland at peter.wakeland@bia.gov, or Orvie Danzuka,



Photo of Rocky Boy contractor delivering logs

Timber Sales Forester at orvie.danzuka@bia.gov.

Tribal Interior Budget Council (TIBC): The next TIBC meeting is scheduled for April 11-14, 2023, in Washington, DC. These meetings provide a venue to discuss issues critical to Indian Forestry and Natural Resources.

National Reforestation Initiative: BIA Forestry has been closely involved in inter-agency efforts to meet the goals for National Reforestation. Targets to reduce the backlog of acres needing replan-



Photo of Rocky Boy fuels staff operating firewood processor

(Continued on page 11)

BIA Forestry and Wildland Fire Management

by Peter Wakeland

(Continued from page 10)

ting to zero by 2030, and realistic targets to reduce the backlog have been submitted. BIA estimates that given sufficient resources, approximately 30,000 acres could be replanted annually. Tribes are encouraged to fully inventory their acres in need of reforestation and coordinate with their Regional Foresters so that projects are ready to go when the data call comes out. Contact Pete Wakeland, peter.wakeland@bia.gov; or Caleb Cain, caleb.cain@bia.gov if you have questions.

Timber Sales Operation Group:

The Harvest of Forest Products Manual 53 IAM 3 and the handbook 53 IAM 3-H have been submitted to RACA for review as have revised contract and permit forms and standard provisions. The previous version of the handbook contained numerous “Illustrations”. The “Illustrations” are being replaced with “examples, exhibits, and templates” which have been submitted for upload on the Forestry Division pages of bia.gov.

A significant TAAMS Forestry document enhancement, the Timber Money Record, was released into TAAMS Production this month. Recognition to Kurt Mettler from the Northwest Region for his dedication to accomplishing the enhancement documents, and also to Sean Maiers from the Midwest Region for his contribution to user acceptance testing. The enhancement was released in a beta stage as during development we have identified additional changes to be made and anticipate fixes will need to be made. If any errors are noted, please bring those to the attention of john.baskette@bia.gov and kurt.mettler@bia.gov.

The approved TAAMS forestry schedule is as follows, with the first two courses being accomplished with full classes:

Course	Dates	Location
TAAMS Forestry Management Overview	March 15-16, 2023	Microsoft Teams
Introductory TAAMS Forestry	March 21-24, 2023	Dallas, TX
Advanced TAAMS Forestry	April 18-21, 2023	Dallas, TX
Introductory TAAMS Forestry	TBD, Summer 2023	TBD
Advanced TAAMS Forestry	TBD, Summer 2023	TBD

Timber Team: The Timber Team continues to be short-handed, but help is on the way. Two new foresters are scheduled to be in Billings starting mid to late April. Three selections were made from the February cert and are expecting them to be onboarded early summer of 2023. All new team members are highly skilled and are looking forward to being fully staffed again going into the field season.

February and March have kept them busy, they started off with a two-week assignment cruising timber for the Mississippi Choctaw in the Eastern Region. This program is down to one forester and having the Timber Team and Regional staff onsite helped the tribe move in the right direction on managing their pine plantations.

The next assignment, the Team traveled to Shawano, Wisconsin to assist the Stockbridge Munsee Forestry Department with marking wind damaged trees for a large-scale windfall salvage sale. The goal was to assist with marking trees to be cut, in predetermined timber sale areas to expedite the marking process, as 60% of their forest had been damaged by a wind-storm. Trees damaged enough for removal include trees with 50% or greater crown damage, root sprung trees, trees leaning greater than 15 degrees due to wind, or trees with a cut tree leaning into them. With only one Team member available for this assignment, along with

snowshoeing in deep snow, 150 acres was completed.

Timber Team wrapped up installing CFI plots on the Alabama Coushatta Tribe of Texas trust lands by installing over 80 permanent plots.



Photo of CFI training at Alabama Coushatta Tribe of Texas

This assignment was led by the Southern Plains Region and the Tribe, with staff working together from the Rocky Mountain Region, FIP and Yakama Agency.

Following is a list of the Timber Team’s tentative schedule for FY 2023 year:

- April 10 – April 21, 2023: Uintah and Ouray Reservation, Western Region (Sale Prep)
- May 7 – May 20, 2023: Nisqually Reservation, Northwest Region (Stand Exams)
- May 30 – June 9, 2023: Blackfeet Reservation, Rocky Mountain Region (Sale Prep)
- June 18 – June 30, 2023: Makah Reservation, Northwest Region (Stand Exams)
- July 10 – July 21, 2023: Rocky Boy Reservation, Rocky Mountain Region (Salvage Prep)
- August 1 – August 31, 2023: Open Dates (pending proposals)
- September 5 – September 29,

(Continued on page 12)

(Continued from page 11)

2023: Open Dates (pending proposals)

We are seeking **proposals** for fall and winter of FY24 and federal/tribal staff that would like to work with the Timber Team on any assignment this year.

Timber Team has a new web page hosted on BIA.gov, complete with a project request form and information about the Timber Team <https://www.bia.gov/service/timber-team>.

Forest Health: The BIA Division of Forestry received Forest Health proposals in November 2022. The proposals were ranked in-house and uploaded to the Forhealth database for review by the Forest Service team. The team recently selected two proposals to be awarded. Central Office Staff will work with the Office of Trust Services to get the funding out to the Region and/or Office of Self-Governance so that Tribes can begin field work. The process has been streamlined so that the awarding Tribes will be notified earlier in the year, and they can set their respective field schedule(s). For more information, please contact Orvie Danzuka, Timber Sales Forester at orvie.danzuka@bia.gov.

BRANCH OF FOREST INVENTORY AND PLANNING (FIP)

FIP Name Change: *Formerly the Branch of Forest Resources Planning (BOFRP).*

Staffing: FIP advertised two vacant Forest Analyst forester positions on USAJOBS with a closing date of 15 March 2023. Therefore, we

are excited to bring two new foresters to the team.

Inventory Projects Update: The team is actively working on fourteen forest inventory projects. Currently, 25% of the inventory projects are at FIP, and 75% are with the region, agency, or tribe. The foresters are providing technical support for the Alabama Coushatta data collection. The Colville PD CFI, Ute Mountain, and Seminole materials are currently being developed and will be ready for prior to data collection this summer and fall. The foresters continue to provide excellent support to the field units when requested.

Projects at FIP	
Initiation - 2023	5
Initiation - 2024-2026	5
Cleaning/Processing	3
Analysis	1
Total (25%)	13

Projects at Region, Agency, Tribe	
Data Collection	17
Cleaning	1
Processing	1
FIA	21
Total (75%)	40

National Continuous Forest Inventory (CFI): The FIP Desktop Application codes need to update to handle the new ingrowth code. The branch chief elevated the issues as a high priority for the programmers to fix within the master database. In addition, during testing, we found the export files from the desktop application into the analysis are also not working, and the programmers are working on resolving the issue. Therefore, the processing step is on hold until a new release is available. FIP will send the final document to the IPOG team for review and approval. The regions will use this stan-

dardized field manual for all new inventory projects; the updates are approximately 75% completed.

FIP Application Suite Status: The FIP application suite continues to progress through its development cycle. The tablet and desktop components are currently being adjusted to match a revamped and more standardized CFI project database schema. Updated report formatting and capability on the analysis results are planned to follow this new database schema. In addition, the tablet and desktop components continue to receive operational corrections and improvements as needs are identified.

National Advanced Silviculture Program (NASP): NASP is valuable training for any journey-level forester looking to further themselves, their home Bureaus, Agencies, or Tribes. NASP Modules are Masters-level instruction led by University Professors. The training covers stand dynamics, planning, and integrating multiple disciplines into Forestry Management.

The BIA sponsors up to five candidates for each NASP Class. Tuition, Travel, Salary, and Per Diem are covered for BIA employees. In addition, the BIA pays for the tuition of selected tribal candidates (tuition usually covers most of the housing and meals). The candidate's home unit covers travel, salary, and additional per diem.

NASP 16: The BIA sponsored five candidates for NASP 16. These candidates completed Module 3 in early February; all got "A's," and their Module 3 scores were ahead of the class curve. As a result, NASP 16 candidates only have Module 4 left to finish NASP.

(Continued on page 13)

BIA Forestry and Wildland Fire Management

by Peter Wakeland

(Continued from page 12)

NASP 17: Four Candidates have been selected to attend NASP 17. Three are BIA, and one is a Tribal employee. Module 1 of NASP 17 starts in Cloquet, MN, on July 17. Good luck to all our NASP 17 candidates!

Silvicultural Certification Using Task Book: The BIA has recently collaborated with the US Forest Service to adopt the Silviculture Certification Task book as the BIA's method for certifying Silviculturists. It is well known that in the BIA, only successful completion of the four NASP modules is required for Foresters to write and sign prescriptions. Under the negotiated agreement, successful completion of the Task book allows both Agencies to accept each other's employees' Silvicultural certifications.

Tom Lowell, a Certified Silviculturist at Central Office, will coordinate the Silviculturist Task book Certification Process. Tom has been coordinating with some of the Regions already on the Task book. Please call him with any questions you might have on the topic. The current Task book needs minor re-writing to make the Task book more "BIA-centric." This re-writing is expected to be completed as soon as possible.

Policy Revision: For the past two months, the Chapter 9 Silviculture Manual and Handbook workgroup has been meeting almost biweekly. As a result, the Chapter 9 Manual is in Final Draft form. One more meeting on March 23 is expected to finalize the manual to the point where it can be edited for 508 compliance and RACA review. This is expected by the middle of April. After the manual, we will continue

work on the Chapter 9 Handbook. Once the Manual and Handbook are moved into the new format, the workgroup will update to include the new silviculture certification process unless the decision is made to have them earlier in the process.

The 53 IAM Chapter 8 Handbook team has continued to meet regularly and is planning three in-person trips this year to put a significant push into completing the revised draft of this handbook section. Throughout the revision process, they identified several parts of the corresponding manual that need updating. Because of this, they will also review the Ch 8 manual ahead of the handbook, where revisions are required. The handbook team is preparing for their first in-person meeting in Anchorage, AK, at the end of April. They also plan to meet in Lakewood, CO, and Nashville, TN, this year. In addition to working on reviewing the handbook sections individually and in person, they also meet every other week over Teams meetings. They plan to do so throughout the calendar year.

FUELS MANAGEMENT

BIA Supports Restoration of Bison Populations Through Wildland Fire Management: By Lessa Peter -

On March 3, 2023, the Department of Interior Secretary Deb Haaland announced that significant action will be taken by the Department to restore bison populations as part of the new restoration and resilience framework. The action is in effort to help restore what was once 60 million American bison in North America that dwindled down to less than 500 due to uncontrolled hunting and a U.S. policy of eradication tied to controlling Tribes

through their means of sustenance, shelter, and cultural ties.

In support of the Secretary's bison initiative, over the past seven years, the Bureau of Indian Affairs Division of Wildland Fire Management has provided Tribes with Reserved Treaty Rights Lands (RTRL) funding to use fire in various ways to support bison restoration. The RTRL program's intent is to provide Tribes the opportunities to conduct Tribally determined project work on ancestral lands regardless of ownership to enhance the health and resiliency of priority Tribal natural resources with high risks of wildland fire. As a historical cultural resource dating back over 10,000 years, bison restoration is a priority for Tribes



Photo of prescribed burn ignitions burn through weeds and dead grass to restore bison range near the Flathead Indian Reservation in 2017.

throughout the nation.

From 2015 to 2018, the Confederated Salish Kootenai Tribes (CSKT) partnered with U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to restore a National Bison Range on the 1.3-million-acre Flathead Indian Reservation in northwest Montana. The project used \$480,000 of RTRL funds to create work for Tribal crews to monitor, research, administer mechanical, weed, and burn out treatments to land for forest restoration. In total, 920 acres of under burning, 320 acres of thinning, 60 acres of pile burning, and 611 acres of noxious weed treat-

(Continued on page 14)

BIA Forestry and Wildland Fire Management

by Peter Wakeland

(Continued from page 13)

ments took place under the Nation Bison Range project.

In 2019, Bison Range 2 was established as an RTRL continuation project to build upon the great work from the previous National Bison Range project. Due to the success of the previous project, the budget was then increased to \$1M in total. The Bison Range 2 project's intent consisted of completing an infrastructure plan, forest inventory, programmatic burn plan, mechanical treatments and weed treatments, which were all key components to restore the land health. CSKT was grateful for the work that has been done in partnership with the USFWS over the last seven years and the bison restoration project is now in its final stages of completion.

The Prairie Band Potawatomi (PBP) Nation, in northeast Kansas, administered its first RTRL project in 2017, the Buffalo Ridge



Photo of prescribed burn taking place for the National Bison Range project.

Rx RTRL project, designed to enhance 411 acres for Bison grazing. Prescribed fire (Rx) uses fire as a restorative product to replenish the land. Eastern Red Cedar, an invasive tree species, had aggressively taken over the site choking out native grasses and wildflowers that bison rely on for sustenance. The PBP used RTRL funding to cut, pile, and burn the Red Cedar, followed by maintenance prescribed fire to further control, and re-establish a robust native grass environment. Buffalo Ridge continues

to require prescribed burn maintenance prior to grazing, which removes a thick thatch that has little nutritional value and allows for more nutritional, soft grasses to flourish. Post RTRL treatment, the PBP Lands Department fenced the area and continues to utilize the site for bison management.

In FY2019, the Chickasaw Nation used RTRL funding to partner with the National Park Service (NPS) to apply Rx to a unit of land in the Chickasaw National Recreation Area (CNRA) located in Sulphur, Oklahoma. Part of CNRA is occupied by a herd of bison which are allowed to roam and graze in a designated area. 60 acres of the land received prescribed burn to restore grasslands in this unit of CNRA where a new bison pen was to be built. The RTRL project benefited multiple landowners including Tribal, private, and public properties by reducing overgrowth and fuel loading of the unit in addition to preparing the area for bison to be rotated in to graze.

In the recent restoration announcement, Secretary Deb Haaland noted, "While the overall recovery of bison over the last 130 years is a conservation success story, significant work remains to not only ensure that bison will remain a viable species but also to restore grassland ecosystems, strengthen rural economies dependent on grassland health and provide for the return of bison to Tribally owned and ancestral lands."

In support of the Department's efforts to restore the American Bison species and integrate Indigenous Knowledge into our shared stewardship goals, BIA Division of Wildland Fire management will continue its work to replenish natural grasslands and shelter to sup-

port bison populations.

In FY2022, the BIA Division of Wildland Fire Management provided a total of \$11M of RTRL funding to Tribes. The Division expects to continue to support national resource and fuels management projects like bison restoration with FY2023 RTRL funding.

Hualapai Tribe Uses Bipartisan



Photo of American Bison graze in newly restored grasslands on The Prairie Band Potawatomi Nation land.

Infrastructure Law Funding to Implement LiDAR in Natural Resource Management: By Lessa Peter - The Hualapai (People of the Tall Pine) Tribe is in northwest Arizona with a land base that encompasses over a million acres. The land has four primary fuel types: timber – Ponderosa Pine, woodland – Pinyon and Juniper, grassland – sage, and riparian – Cottonwood and Salt Cedar. In FY2022, \$1,898,187 of the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law funding, amounting to approximately \$1.85 per acre, was granted to the Tribe for a 5-year project called Jump Start. The project is using Light Detection and Ranging (LiDAR) technology to capture 3D imagery of the Tribe's vegetation, infrastructure, watersheds, and overall land to help the Tribe with numerous current and future land management and use projects.

High-resolution LiDAR (20ppm)

(Continued on page 15)

BIA Forestry and Wildland Fire Management

by Peter Wakeland

(Continued from page 14)

data was collected over the reservation between October and November 2022 along with simultaneous 12-inch resolution color imagery. The data collection was accomplished by the contract awardee, Northwest Management, Inc., using a 3 fixed-wing aircraft in coordination with the Hualapai airfield personnel and natural resource teams. The analyses applied to these data will yield a virtual/digital twin of the entire landscape including roads, streams, forest inventory, woodland inventories, and fire risk maps. These tools are inclusive of real-time market and resource condition information and supported by field data calibration of all the remotely sensed layers.

When the LiDAR data is received this spring, the Tribe's Forestry and Wildland Fire Management staff will use the data to identify stand

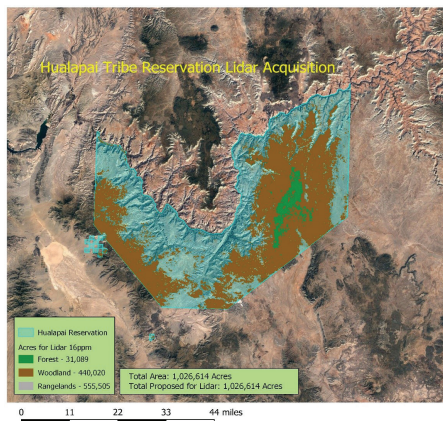


Photo of 2022 Reservation map provided by Northwest Management, Inc

density (volume/diameter distribution), ecotones, and updates on vegetated acreage. The data will dictate project type and priority for each Forest Development, Timber, and Hazardous Fuels Reduction program. It will further provide Wildland Fire Management with the ability to identify acreage at high-risk of wildfire and support strategic planning from the per-

spective of fire spread/containment and efficient resource use planning and preparedness.

“LiDAR allows us to pull data for one acre out of more than a million and show us every single tree stand, data on the stand itself and the land it sits on,” stated Hualapai Tribe Director of Forestry & Wildland Fire Management Mel Hunter, Jr. “So, there is a lot more representation of species, diameter and classes of vegetation rather than just the plots of land we currently take inventory of by walking through the stands on foot.”

Interest in LiDAR grew within the Hualapai Tribe as a collaborative effort in discussing technology use and included other non-natural resource teams such as Public Works, Cultural Resources, and Tribal leadership. Projects identified by the Tribe include range unit restorations to increase grazeland for cattle, recreational use for Tribal members, identifying possible burial sites using mineralization maps, and road development within the reservation. The Tribe's Department of Natural Resources provided insightful perspectives in bringing these teams of varying interests together to gain informed decisions on the use and potential applications of new technology to support multiple objectives for the Hualapai Tribe.

“We are pleased to have the continued support from Hualapai trib-

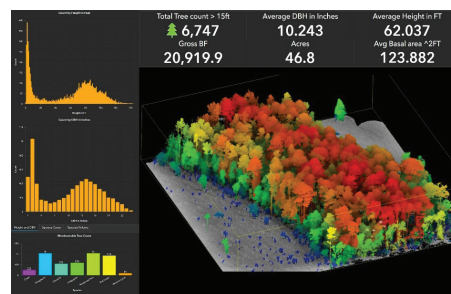


Photo of 2022 tree stand LiDAR capture provided by Northwest Management, Inc.

al council, Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) Western Region, BIA Division of Wildland Fire Management, and Northwest Management, Inc. We are all looking forward to the data and tools to be provided as well as our ideas of what to expect. We also realize this technology offers opportunities and collaborations beyond what we currently see, and the Hualapai Tribe is eager to explore and grow these.”

Fuels FY23 Preliminary Planning Stats:

BASE: 566 Treatments and Activities Planned for 138,636 Acres and 17 Monitoring Activities Planned for 2,535 Acres of Monitoring. (Of this Planning total, 237 Planned Treatments are Prescribed Fire for 107,174 Acres)

BIL: 336 Treatments and Activities Planned for 109,571 Acres and 8 Monitoring Activities (inclusive of 2 LiDAR Activities) for 7,482,930 Acres of Monitoring. (Of this planning total, 67 Planned Treatments are Prescribed Fire for 21,324 Acres)

RTRL: Currently 11 Treatments planned for 1,510 Acres (Of this Planning total, 5 Planned Treatments are Prescribed Fire for 1,026 Acres. The total planned data is fluid as some treatments were not identified in NFPORS yet and additional projects will likely be approved)

Accomplishments Reported since October 1, 2022, in NFPORS for FY 2023: (Special note: target acres are BIL only!!! – FY 23 base FPOW has not been developed to date. Actual acres are all inclusive).

Post Wildfire Recovery: This past fiscal year there were 12 fires that impacted trust lands of 13 Tribes/

(Continued on page 16)

(Continued from page 15)

pueblos. Approximately 89,359 acres were affected and assessed for post wildfire recovery (PWR). \$1.53 million was authorized for emergency stabilization issues and approximately \$8.5 million was approved to address burned area rehabilitation projects. Additionally, there was an assessment conducted on fee lands of the Tulalip Tribes of Washington. The assessment concluded that \$740,000 of treatments were necessary to address forestry, infrastructure, and vegetation issues.

The PWR program is currently experiencing a change in staff personnel; the PWR director and deputy director have both recently accepted new positions. Jennifer Hickman was hired in mid-October 2022 as the new Natural Resources Watershed specialist. The PWR program anticipates the arrival of a new deputy director, possibly within the next couple of months.

PWR programs is looking into partnering and working with Eco-cultural out of Flagstaff, Arizona. The primary focus will be on post-fire reforestation and riparian restoration. They currently have projects with Hopi, Navajo, Apache and Zuni. PWR will work to enhance some of these efforts.

USFWS is also seeking PWR to assist and partner with the Chemehuevi Tribe to increase their nursey program. We are continuing to explore and seek out opportunities on how to partner with USFWS and BIA.

Wildfire Prevention: Interagency collaboration on the development of the GS-0456 Wildfire Prevention Standard Position Descriptions will begin in April. Providing support for additional Wildfire Pre-

vention Spatial Planning Strategies (WPSAPS) software application training. 4 courses are planned over the next 12 months. Please contact your Regional Prevention Specialist for additional information.

Staff will continue to provide leadership and technical guidance for the WPSAPS software application.

Assisting Turtle Mountain and Fort Peck Agencies in the development of new wildfire prevention plans.

OPERATIONS

Wildfire Activity: 2023 Wildfires (to date) - In the first full quarter of Calendar Year 2023, Indian Country has seen 431 wildfires reported (in InFORM), burning over 19,000 acres. As is typical in the early season, wildfire activity on or near Indian lands has been primarily concentrated in the southern states – particularly Oklahoma. Twelve fires of 500 acres or larger size have been reported so far this year, and all but one was in BIA's Eastern Oklahoma Region, on lands protected by Osage Agency and Okmulgee Agency. The sole exception was a 509-acre fire that burned in February on Colorado River Agency in BIA's Western Region.

CY2023 Wildfires (YTD; as of 3/30)		
BIA Region	Fires	Acres
Alaska	-	-
Eastern	15	7
Eastern OK	284	17,972
Great Plains	15	112
Midwest	-	-
Navajo	3	1
Northwest	20	83
Pacific	34	23
Rocky Mtn	12	-
Southern Plains	22	233
Southwest	3	5
Western	23	669
Indian Country Totals:	431	19,107

2023 Fire Season Outlook – The early outlook for the 2023 fire season anticipates normal or even below normal significant fire potential for most parts of the country. Currently, fire potential is elevated in parts of Florida, Texas, and New Mexico; however, areas in Colorado, Kansas, and Oklahoma have been notably dry too. Unprecedented winter moisture has resolved or reduced the long-term drought that had afflicted many western states, including California. The transition from a La Niña to El Niño climate pattern is likely underway, but the timing and intensity of this shift remains uncertain. The El Niño pattern typically results in cooler, moister conditions across the southern states and warmer and drier conditions across the northern states, but any significant influence on fire activity may not arise until mid to late summer. Heavy carry-over grass fuel loading is a concern for the Snake River and Columbia River Basins. Other fuels concerns include a late-season freeze that interrupted green-up across much of the Southeast, as well as salt-cured fuels in low-lying areas of Florida due to storm surges from last year's hurricanes.

Long-Term Severity – On March 30, the BIA Eastern Region's request for Long-Term Severity funding was approved. Mobilization of aircraft and other initial attack resources is underway, to bolster readiness in areas where fire potential is elevated. Currently, the Indian lands in Florida are at greatest risk for increased wildfire activity. However, precipitation has reduced fire danger – at least temporarily – on the lands protected by the Eastern Cherokee Agency, which is the other area of primary concern.

(Continued on page 17)

BIA Forestry and Wildland Fire Management

by Peter Wakeland

(Continued from page 16)

Training/Workforce Development: Complex Incident Management- CIM continues moving forward. This year at least two regions will utilize the CIM model for IMT configuration and in 2024 we will transition on a national level. BIA plans to hold a meeting for our AA's/ RFMO's mid-April to discuss new roles and responsibilities associated with ordering these new CIM Teams including utilizing the new Risk Complexity Analysis form.

0456 Series Wildland Fire PD's- This effort, with a June 2023 deadline, is steamrolling forward as planned. SME's and HR meet multiple times each week. Operations PD's have been completed and rolled out last week for agencies to begin familiarizing themselves. The PDs are still contingent on getting updated job analysis written before they can be fully utilized, however it is expected that by June the full gamete of fire PD's will be available.

Type 3 C and G Training- As CIM evolves so must our Type 3 C and G training. NWCG approved a short, mid and long-term plan for Type 3 C and G and unit leader position training to keep pace with new demands. Mid and Long term T3 training will consist of T3 C and G completing a basic IMT course and PTB before they can become qualified- this is a departure from our current model of not requiring a basic IMT course and allowing them to take S-300 after the PTB has been signed off.

NWCG Training Modernization Project (IPTM)- NWCG training has been allotted \$22 million dollars of BIL funding to have a contractor revise each of NWCG's

#125 courses. This will be on a 5-year revision cycle with the goal of NWCG staff maintaining the courses once they have been fully revised. Other efforts of the IPTM include position descriptions, more blended coursework, and more specific and less redundant position task books.

IQCS 2.0- The Incident Qualifications and Certification System will be revising its platform soon. Work has already begun, and staff is being prioritized to finish the design of the new platform and begin the development phase. Expectations are that the field will see and begin using IQCS 2.0 within the next 1-2 years.

Engine Operator (ENOP)- DWFM continues to fund and coordinate national level engine operator courses, with the goal in mind of further professional development for our personnel. Courses in 2023 include locations of: Phoenix, Sycuan, Albuquerque, and Billings. This course emphasizes safety and driving components which were lacking with our previous pathways to attaining an Engine Boss qualification.

Aviation: The National Aviation Office (NAO) is Working on filling three NAO vacancies. We've added one Data/GIS Specialist to assist with the integration, streamline, and flow of critical data within the program. The 2022 fire season resulted in a below average total flight time for all aviation categories in support of initial attack and large fire support on trust and inter-agency lands.

BIA Exclusive Use and On-Call Managed Contracts:

- Rotor wing – 1,439 hours
- Fixed wing – 828 hours

- UAS – 0

There weren't any accidents or injuries reported during aviation operations on Trust land. The NAO will continue to assist in improving existing facilities and aviation equipment. We're encouraging and supporting all exclusive use helicopters to increase staffing levels to the maximum capacity to increase succession levels.

The uncrewed aerial systems (UAS) demand has significantly increase, therefore additional efforts and collaboration has been provided to bring existing pilots to proficiency levels, additional training courses will be scheduled, and acquisition of new platforms will be facilitated with regional, agency, and tribes.

Budget: PL 117-328, the Consolidated Appropriations Act for 2023, provides Wildland Fire Management funds to BIA in the following areas and amounts, representing a 23.5% increase over 2022: Preparedness, \$91.6 million; Fuels Management, \$62.5 million; Burned Area Rehabilitation, \$6.5 million; Fire Facilities Construction and Maintenance, \$3.2 million. Additionally, \$10.1 is provided in Emergency Stabilization and \$5.9 million in Severity.



2023 ITC Symposium Registration

<https://www.eventsquid.com/event/19564>

Online registration closes June 6, 2023. Register now!!

<u>Registration Fee Types</u>	<u>Early Price Up to May 5</u>	<u>Late Price May 6 to June 6</u>
General or Associate Member	\$275.00	\$375.00
Government Employee	\$300.00	\$400.00
All Others	\$325.00	\$425.00
Pre-Symposium Workshops	\$105.00	\$120.00
Exhibit Booth Space (2 registrations)	\$750.00	\$850.00
Exhibit Terms: Subletting or sharing space is prohibited. Registration is for the use of exhibitors & is nontransferable.		

Merchandise

Company Registration Packet Inserts	\$500.00
Guest Luncheon Ticket	\$ 40.00
Guest Awards Banquet Ticket	\$ 50.00

**Purchase Guest Meal Tickets online
until June 6. No onsite sales.**

The Symposium Registration fee includes a Registration Packet, Tuesday Luncheon, Host Tribe Welcome Dinner, Wednesday Tribal Tour, Thursday Luncheon, Thursday Awards Banquet, and Final Proceedings.

Pre-Symposium workshop fees include lunch.

Registration fees can be paid online by credit card or through mail by check or money order.

Payments must be received by Tuesday, June 6, 2023, please mail to our CURRENT address:

**Intertribal Timber Council
Symposium Registration
PO Box 11790
Portland, OR 97211
503-282-4296**

ITC uses symposium fees to cover symposium-operating costs. Therefore, we have established the following refund policies:

- All refund requests must be emailed to monica@itcnet.org.
- Refund requests received after Friday, May 19, 2023, will be charged a \$100 processing fee.
- No refunds will be issued after Friday, May 26, 2023.
- An NSF fee will be charged for returned checks.

2023 Event Schedule

Pre-Symposium Workshops

Day	Time	Description	Location
Mon, Jun 12	8:00 am – 3:30 pm	Pre-Symposium Workshop 1: USDA-NRCS Funding & Opportunities	Northern Lights Casino Event Center
	8:00 am – 4:00 pm	Pre-Symposium Workshop 2: Wildland Fire	Northern Lights Casino Event Center. Van loading from 12:45 pm – 1:00 pm for field tour of Active Management on Local Units
	8:00 am - 4:00 pm	Pre-Symposium Workshop: 3 Crafting Rice Knockers	Check in at Northern Lights Casino Event Center from 7:00 am – 7:45 am. Van loading from 7:45 am - 8:00 am for Cass Lake Resource Management.
	8:00 am – 4:00 pm	Pre-Symposium Workshop 4: Tour of the Mississippi Headwaters at Lake Itasca	Check in at Northern Lights Casino Event Center from 7:00 am – 7:45 am. Bus loading from 7:45 - 8:00 am for Itasca State Park.
	8:00 am – 2:00 pm	Pre-Symposium Workshop 5: Fishing Trip on Leech Lake	Check in at Northern Lights Casino Event Center from 7:00 am – 7:45 am. Van loading from 7:45 am - 8:00 am for Leech Lake.
	12:00 pm - 1:00 pm	Pre-Symposium Workshop 1 & 2 Attendee Lunch	Northern Lights Casino Event Center
	2:00 - 7:00 pm	Exhibitor Set Up	Northern Lights Casino Event Center

Symposium Officially Begins

Day	Time	Description	Location
Mon, Jun 12	4:00 - 7:00 pm	Registration	Northern Lights Casino Event Center
	5:00 - 7:00 pm	Host Icebreaker	Northern Lights Casino Event Center: Ballroom
Tue, Jun 13	7:00 am - 4:30 pm	Registration & Raffle	Northern Lights Casino Event Center
	7:00 am - 4:30 pm	Exhibits	Northern Lights Casino Event Center
	8:00 am - 4:30 pm	General Session	Northern Lights Casino Event Center: Ballroom
	12:00 - 1:00 pm	ITC Luncheon	Northern Lights Casino Event Center
	6:00 - 9:00 pm	Host Welcome Dinner	Onigum Community Center 8826 Onigum Rd NW, Walker, MN
Wed, Jun 14	7:30 - 8:00 am	Bus loading for Tribal Tour	Northern Lights Casino Event Center
	8:00 am - 4:30 pm	Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe Tribal Tour	Off Property
	5:30 - 7:30 pm	General Membership Meeting	Northern Lights Casino Event Center
Thu, Jun 15	7:30 am - 3:00 pm	Registration & Raffle	Northern Lights Casino Event Center
	7:30 am - 4:00 pm	Exhibits	Northern Lights Casino Event Center
	8:00 am - 10:00 am	General Session Updates	Northern Lights Casino Event Center: Ballroom
	10:30 am - 4:15 pm	Workshop 1: Cross-Boundary Shared Stewardship Opportunities	Northern Lights Casino Event Center
	10:30 am - 4:15 pm	Workshop 2: Forest Technology Applications and Their Use for Assessing Fire Risk Across a Landscape	Northern Lights Casino Event Center
	10:30 am - 4:15 pm	Workshop 3: Indian Trust Asset Reform Act (ITARA)	Northern Lights Casino Event Center
	12:00 - 1:15 pm	Lunch	Northern Lights Casino Event Center
	4:30 - 6:00 pm	Annual Business Meeting	Northern Lights Casino Event Center
	6:30 - 9:30 pm	Annual Awards Banquet	Northern Lights Casino Event Center: Ballroom
All	Varies	SAF CFE Credits	Current members sign in at Registration
Northern Lights Casino, Hotel & Event Center, 6800 Y Frontage Rd NW, Walker, MN 56484			



INTERTRIBAL TIMBER COUNCIL

PO BOX 11790

Portland, Oregon 97211

First Class
