



INTERTRIBAL TIMBER COUNCIL TIMBER NOTES

Fall ~ 2022



Matt Hill

POLITICAL OUTLOOK

We are on the cusp of a federal mid-term election, which traditional has shifted congressional seats away from the sitting President. As of writing this article, Republicans have a slight edge in capturing most of the U.S. House of Representatives. Meanwhile, Democrats have a slight edge in gaining seats in the Senate and retaining control there.

The outcome of the election will impact the appropriations process and priorities (see below) and certainly the policy direction of the next two-year Congress. ITC stands ready to work with both parties, as we always have, to advance the interests of tribal forest management and the benefits it yields for Indian communities.

Tribal Firefighter Pay Equity: In June, the ITC sent a letter to Interi-

or Secretary urging the department to treat tribally contracted firefighters the same way other “federal” firefighters are treated in terms of pay increases. At issue is the pay increase provided by Congress to federal firefighters in the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, and whether tribal FTEs are equivalent to Federal FTEs. Such an interpretation fails to capture the unique relationship between tribes and federal agencies pursuant to the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act. It also fails to recognize that firefighters performing those federal functions identified in the P.L. 93-638 contract are required to do so in accordance with the Code of Federal Regulations (25 CFR), Indian Affairs Manual (90 IAM, Wildland Fire Management), and National Wildfire Coordination Group (NWCG) 310-1 Wildland Fire Qualifications System Guide.

ITC has had multiple conversations with the Office of Wildland Fire which has informed ITC that the department is working on a long-term solution. ITC is also in contact with congressional offices to examine not only a long-term fix but interim measures to ensure that tribal firefighters do not lose out on another fire season of inequitable pay.

FY23 Appropriations Status: At the end of September the Senate passed a bipartisan “continuing resolution” to fund the government until December 16, 2022. At that point, either another “CR” will be passed, or Congress must reach

agreement upon and pass the actual appropriations bills for Fiscal Year 2023, which began October 1.

In July, the House passed a package of six FY23 appropriations bills including one for the DOI/IHS. The committee report language shows that we would see an \$8M increase in BIA Forestry:

- **Forestry.** — The recommendation includes \$68,418,000 for Forestry, \$8,141,000 above the enacted level and \$4,901,000 above the budget request. Within this amount, the Committee recommends \$35,940,000 for Forestry Program (TPA), which includes a general program increase, and \$32,478,000 for Forestry Projects, which includes additional funds for Light Detection and Ranging (Lidar).

The Senate Appropriations Committee has released its version of the FY23 Interior appropriations bill. It proposes a smaller increase in BIA Forestry than the House bill:

(Continued on page 3)

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Legislative Update.	1
President’s Message	2
Wildland Fire Technical Specialist	4
Awards Committee.	5
BIA Forestry and Wildland Fire Management	6
Symposium Committee	12
Operations Committee.	13
Education Committee	14

President's Message

by Cody Desautel



Cody Desautel

Greetings to the ITC community. Out West, we are rounding the corner on fire season that started with a busy year in the southwest but brought a much-needed reprieve to most of the west. With fire season ending we look forward to the start of prescribed fire season both on and off reservation. With the Forest Service 90-day pause on burns also ending, we collectively have an opportunity to accomplish a great deal in the coming fall and spring.

I am heartened by the level of support for tribal forest management currently seen at the national level. I believe this is largely the result of years of tribes and ITC telling our stories, advancing new policies, demonstrating sound ecosystem management practices, and charting a better course for forest management.

As such, the ITC has been more engaged in federal policy development than any other point in the almost 20 years I've been around the organization. In recent months, I have participated in several high-level discussions and consultations with the U.S. Department of Agriculture (including the Natural Resources Conservation Service and Forest Service) and Department of the Interior (BLM, BIA and Office of Wild-

land Fire) about tribal partnerships in land and fire management. In July, ITC Vice-President Phil Rigdon participated in a congressional wildfire forum, chaired by U.S. Rep. Bruce Westerman — a trained forester himself and Ranking Member of the House Committee on Natural Resources. In August, I was able to give Rep. Westerman a tour of Colville's Forest and show him who these issues play out on the ground.

We also have several tribes — Colville, Cow Creek, and Karuk included in the Wildland Fire Mitigation and Management Commission, which was chartered by Congress. We are working on a national basis to develop recommendations and strategies on ways to better prevent, manage, suppress, and recover from wildfires. In September the commission held the first in person meeting, where we organized into workgroups in eight functional areas. The workgroups will provide recommendations for a few topics, including aerial firefighting strategies and equipment needs.

The ITC is working with our partners in USDA Office of Tribal Relations, and the Native Farm Bill Coalition to highlight the importance of tribal participation in the management of federal forests. We will be working on helping shape the definition of "co-management" and "co-stewardship," and what implementation might look like on federal lands. This work could include statutory changes in the next Farm Bill.

Lastly, the IFMAT team is scheduled to deliver a draft report to the ITC IFMAT oversight committee on November 20, 2022. The oversight committee will work diligently over the months of November and December to get the report reviewed and edited. The report should

be complete in the spring of 2023 and will be followed by a presentation to Congress in late spring. Once the report and presentation are complete the board will work on an implementation plan to ensure the recommendations are acted on.

The work ITC is doing now would not be possible without the ongoing support of our member tribes. Likewise, the progress we make in the near-term will yield benefits to our ancestral landscapes for generations to come. Thank you for your support of this incredible organization.



Legislative Update

Matt Hill

(Continued from cover)

- “Tribal Forestry. — The bill provides \$63,517,000 for Tribal Forestry, an increase of \$3,240,000 above the enacted level and equal to the request. Of these funds, \$33,215,000 is provided for Forestry Projects and \$30,062,000 for base funding.”

Senate report language also directs DOI to:

- “to promote and expand the use of agreements with Indian Tribes to protect Indian trust resources from catastrophic wildfire, insect and disease infestation, or other threats from adjacent Federal lands, as authorized by law.”
- “continue to coordinate with the Office of Wildland Fire to submit a report describing how the Department determines the use of wildfire suppression and rehabilitation resources and prioritizes Indian forest land.”

A change in political majority in either chamber after the November elections could delay or alter enactment of the FY23 appropriations bills. If Republicans capture the majority of at least one chamber of Congress, they might want to rewrite the FY23 bills with their own priorities and push them off until calendar year 2023.

ITC Letter On “Old Growth”:

On August 12, 2022, the ITC responded a federal “request for information” from DOI and USDA regarding federal old-growth and mature forests. ITC noted that:

- It will be unlikely to find a single definition to apply across the variety of forest types and structures;
- Managing strictly for old trees does not account for historic variability;

- A simple “protection” of old growth may be counter-productive when looking at wildfire protection;
- Management for older trees should allow for climate adaptation strategies and carbon sequestration projects;
- The Tule River TFPA project is an example of competing claims between old growth protection and wildfire resilience.

ITC recommended that:

- Any approach should consider desired future conditions, forest succession, and resilience to ensure management flexibility to assist natural processes that protect current old growth and put other areas on a path to reach characteristics.
- Consult with each local or historically/legally relevant tribe to capture site specific recommendations for old growth management;
- Meaningful government-to-government consultation should be with individual tribal governments whenever possible and not national webinars;
- Ensure that the adopted management approaches do not interfere with or diminish protected tribal rights or interests;
- Allow for added management flexibility for tribal input and co-management opportunities such as TFPA, Good Neighbor Authority, Reserved Treaty Rights Lands projects, or similar authorities;
- Develops site-specific plans or goals, not national mandates.

BLM Co-Stewardship Policy:

In September, the BLM published formal guidance that outlines how the agency will continue to partner with Tribes to ensure that co-stewardship of public lands incorpo-

rates and considers Tribal input, values, and interests.

The BLM’s guidance outlines specific policies and guidelines for managing federal lands and waters “in a manner that seeks to protect the treaty, religious, subsistence, and cultural interests of federally recognized Tribes” consistent with the BLM’s mission and applicable law. The BLM will adhere to the principles set forth in the Joint Secretarial Order to engage Tribes in meaningful consultation at the earliest phases of planning and decision-making in order to provide an opportunity for Tribes to shape the direction of the BLM’s land management activities.

Co-stewardship refers to a broad range of working relationships with American Indian and Alaska Native Tribes, as well as Tribal consortia and tribally led entities exercising the delegated authority of federally recognized Tribes. Co-stewardship can include co-management, collaborative and cooperative management, and tribally led stewardship, and can be implemented through cooperative agreements, memoranda of understanding, self-governance agreements, and other mechanisms.

Under the 2021 Joint Secretarial Order, and as outlined by the guidance, the BLM and other bureaus will undertake five specific actions, including:

- Ensuring that all decisions include consideration of how to safeguard the interests of Indian Tribes;
- Entering into co-stewardship agreements when appropriate;
- Identifying and supporting opportunities to consolidate Tribal homelands and empower Tribal stewardship;

(Continued on page 4)

Legislative Update

Matt Hill

(Continued from page 3)

- Performing a legal review of treaty responsibilities and authorities; and
- Issuing a report on compliance with the Joint Secretarial Order.

There is not a similar co-stewardship policy document currently from the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The ITC is in discussion with the Department on gathering tribal input and ideas on what

co-stewardship should look like and any new authorities to enhance its implementation.



Wildland Fire Technical Specialist

by Jim Durglo



Jim Durglo

There is a tremendous amount of predictive service information available to the public and natural resource managers online. This is good information for those interested in tracking wildland fire response throughout the fire year. My favorite sites are the daily national situation report and the daily weather briefing that is provided on the Northern Rockies site.

This year the National Situation Report includes the mobilization of Complex Incident Management Teams. Complex Incident Management Teams are configured to respond to large, complex fires and can expand and reduce staffing in all functional areas as necessary to meet the needs of the incident.

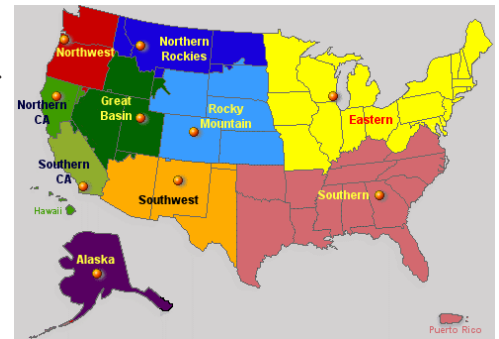
Geographic Area Coordination Centers (GACC): The National Geographic Coordination Center website provides a great overview and background. The United

States is divided into 11 Geographic Areas for the purpose of incident management and mobilization of resources (people, aircraft, ground, and equipment).

All agencies and geographic areas work together under the auspices and direction of the National Inter-agency Fire Center (NIFC).

Although the primary mission of the GACC's is logistical coordination, the Center also has support programs in Predictive Services, Intelligence, and in several Center's Fire Information. Predictive Services consists primarily of professional meteorologists who monitor weather and fuel conditions, conduct briefings, produce fire weather related products, liaison with the National Weather Service, and oversee all aspects of the Remote Automated Weather System.

The Intelligence Section is primarily responsible for collecting and disseminating wildland fire activity information, monitoring the status of national firefighting resources, maintaining year-to-date and historical fire occurrence data, and managing the Situation Report and ICS-209 programs. In some GACCs, the Predictive Services and Intelligence sections work as one unit called the Predictive Services Group. The Predictive Services and Intelligence Sections, whether separated or combined, work collaboratively produc-



Map of the Geographic Area Coordination Centers provided at www.gacc.nifc.gov

ing Weekly, Monthly, and Seasonal Fire Weather/Fire Danger Outlooks.

I visit the intelligence section for a daily update on fire activity. The situation report includes national planning level, fires and acres burned year-to-date by protection agency. Another key piece of information is the listing of active wildfires by geographic area, acres burned, and the number of resources assigned and current cost expenditures for each wildfire.

For instance, the National Situation Report for September 21, 2022, reported that 51,606 fires across the nation burned over 6.8 million acres year-to-date. The ten-year average fires (2012-2021 as of September 21, 2022, is 44,111 fires burning over 6,208,061 acres. The phenomenon that we see today is the more frequent occurrence of mega fires—those over 100,000 acres.

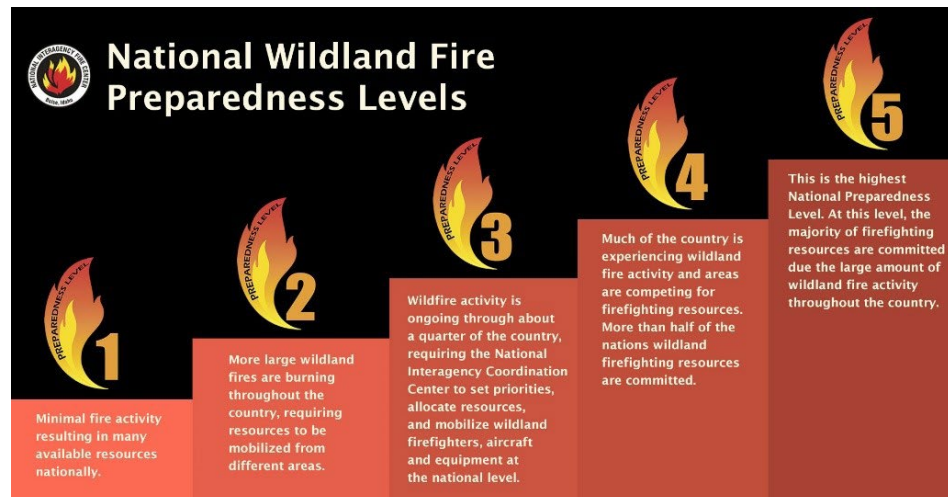
(Continued on page 5)

Wildland Fire Technical Specialist

by Jim Durglo

(Continued from page 4)

Please take some time and search the website for additional information in your respective GACC.



Awards Committee

by Robin Harkins



Robin Harkins

2023 EARLE R. WILCOX AWARDS

The awards committee wishes to extend a huge thank you to Will Putman, Retired Forestry Director, Tanana Chiefs Conference, for his years of service to ITC and the Awards committee. Will has left big boots to fill, and I will do my best as I take on this new role.

As field season for many of us comes to a close, it is time to start thinking about recognizing our peers and others who have made significant contributions to Indi-

an forestry and natural resources through their work in our industry. Nominations are open for the Earle R. Wilcox Memorial Awards and applications due in the ITC Office by January 27, 2023, at 5:00 p.m. Pacific Time.

Earle R Wilcox Memorial Awards honor individuals who have made significant contributions in the field of Indian forestry and natural resources. The awards are given in honor of Mr. Earle R. Wilcox, who will always be remembered for his significant achievements on behalf of Indian people and their forests. Mr. Wilcox's career spanned some 33 years with the Bureau of Indian Affairs across the country, being interrupted by World War II and the Korean War and culminating with his position as Chief of the BIA Forestry Program with his retirement in 1973. After his retirement, Mr. Wilcox continued to serve Indian forestry and contributed greatly to the development of the Intertribal Timber Council and what it stands for, giving with a spirit that exemplifies a man who believed in the greatest good for

Indian people and our forests. His integrity and tenacious spirit inspired those who were privileged to have known him.

Anyone can nominate someone for the award. Details on how to nominate and the application packet requirements for the Earle R. Wilcox Award will be mailed to Tribes in November, can be found on the ITC website https://www.itcnet.org/about_us/awards.html, or can be obtained by calling the ITC office at 503-282-4296. Nominations will be considered for both the regional and national award based on level of contribution and effort.

Award selections will be made during the virtual February Board meeting.



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.

Indian Trust Asset Reform Act (ITARA): The Confederated Tribes of Coos, Lower Umpqua, and Siuslaw Indians (CTCLUSI) have been approved to participate in the Demonstration Project. The Tribe must now develop and submit an Indian Trust Asset Management Plan (ITAMP) for forest land management activities on tribal forest lands held in trust by the Secretary for the benefit of the Tribe. The Tribe may also submit for Secretary approval, Tribal Forestry Regulations as part of their ITAMP, which would streamline the process for managing tribal trust forests by allowing the Tribe certain approval authorities currently held by the Secretary. To be considered for approval by the Secretary, the ITAMP must include certain elements identified in ITARA. Interested, eligible Tribes can still apply to participate in the Demonstration Project. For more information, please contact Pete Wakeland, Chief Forester; peter.wakeland@bia.gov.

Budget / Funding for Forestry Projects: The deadline for BIA Regional Offices to submit funding requests for FY2023 projects to Central Office is November 10, 2022. We know there is a lot of work that needs to be accomplished out there. Please contact your Agency or Regional Office to request Forestry Projects funding.

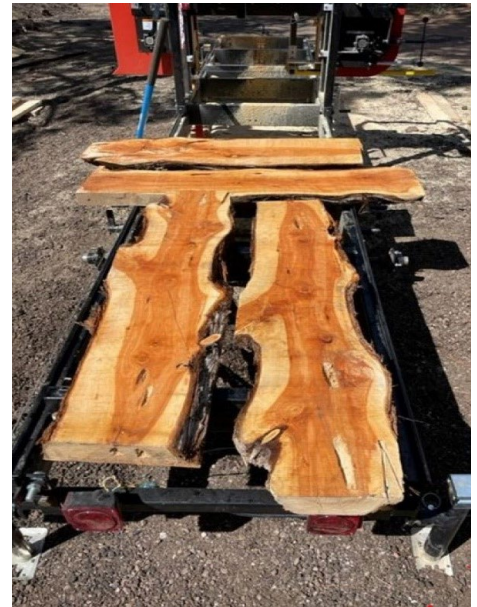
The FY2022 Forestry budget included an increase in the Forestry Projects budget line. A portion of the increase was utilized to support the use of technology to accomplish inventory projects that gather large amounts of data relevant to Forestry and Natural Resources. The use of Lidar has proven to be an efficient and cost-effective method to gather this important data, especially in locations experiencing challenges in staffing levels.

DFWFM funded three Lidar projects in FY2022:

1. Quinault Indian Nation: Lidar Inventory - \$368,902
2. Confederated Tribes of Coos, Lower Umpqua and Siuslaw Indians: Comprehensive Lidar-derived Single Tree Inventory - \$260,000
3. Crow Tribe: Lidar-assisted Complete Natural Resource and Forest Inventory - \$275,400

We anticipate continued support of geospatial technologies in the FY2023 budget. If you have questions about any of your projects or how to develop them, please contact your Regional Forester; or Caleb Cain, Projects Forester; caleb.cain@bia.gov; or Pete Wakeland, Chief Forester; peter.wakeland@bia.gov.

Funding for Portable Infrastructure Projects: The FY2022 budget included an increase in the Forestry



Hualapai Tribe cut juniper that is utilized by cattle district.

Projects budget line. A portion of the increase was utilized to support creative methods to accomplish timber harvest and increase forest health in areas where existing markets create barriers for Tribes to manage their forests.

Seven portable infrastructure projects were funded out of the FY2022 Forestry Projects budget increase. The funding for these projects in Alaska, Northwest, Pacific, and Western Regions totaled \$1,436,000:

1. Port Graham: Portable Infrastructure - \$230,000
2. Colville: Sawmill purchase - \$250,000
3. La Jolla Band of Indians: Portable Infrastructure - \$250,000
4. Hoopa Tribe: Portable Infrastructure - \$176,000
5. Pit River Tribe: Portable Sawmill - \$95,000
6. San Carlos Tribe: Portable Sawmill - \$185,000
7. Hualapai Tribe - \$250,000

(Continued on page 7)

BIA Forestry and Wildland Fire Management

by Peter Wakeland

(Continued from page 6)



Hualapai Tribal corrals with wood milled with portable sawmill.

For more information, please contact Pete Wakeland at peter.wakeland@bia.gov, or Orvie Danzuka, Timber Sales Forester at orvie.danzuka@bia.gov.

Infrastructure Bill: The deadline for FY2023 project proposals has not yet been determined, but updates and information are expected soon. Announcement will be made as soon as additional information is available. The BIA is assisting in setting up a call with ITC and the BLM to discuss FY2023 Ecosystem Restoration (ER) funding opportunities for the Good Neighbor Authority (GNA) and has notified the Regional Foresters of a possible call with US Forest Service State and Private Forestry to discuss FY2023 funding for Tribal Greenhouses. Outside those calls, Tribes are encouraged to develop and submit any ideas for proposals as soon as possible. Projects related to climate, revegetation/ reforestation, habitat restoration, fuels and wildland fire risk reduction, healthy forests, biomass utilization, and cross-boundary data gathering projects are examples of projects that may be eligible for funding.

NOTE: Project proposals relevant to Bison will likely receive attention in FY2023. BIA For-



Seedlings grown at Colville

estry can assist in coordinating with BIA Natural Resources / Range for those proposals.

BIA Forestry also recently contacted the Regional Foresters to see if Tribes were interested in America the Beautiful – Access to Recreation. The idea is to seek funding to construct walking/biking trails on Reservations. As you know, at many Reservations, walking and biking is done on roads and highways, which is often dangerous. Funding for these proposals would not only increase tribal member safety but would also allow for increased access to recreation. BIA Forestry received positive feedback from the Regions and did get some individual interest from Tribes. If this is something that your Tribe would be interested in, please contact Pete Wakeland, Chief Forester, peter.wakeland@bia.gov. The sooner the better!

BIA Forestry staff is available for any questions or technical assistance, and we can share what was developed internally by BIA Forestry for FY2022.

Timber Sales Operation Group (TSOG): The TSOG has continued to work on several projects over the past year including the Carbon, Direct Pay, and FMD National Policy Memorandum documents, update to the 53 IAM Manual, the corresponding handbook, and all the associated contract and permit forms and handbook forms. The 53 IAM handbook draft is being edited to address comments received from the Regions. The Direct Pay and FMD NPM are being edited by the Office of the Solicitor. In the first quarter of Fiscal Year 2023 it is expected that the Carbon Policy NPM will be issued and the 53 IAM Manual and Handbook revisions will be released.

TAAMS Updates: Seven TAAMS Forestry enhancements were approved in FY22 and are in development. Three of these enhancements should be included in the next TAAMS release (TAAMS 6.5). Still to come will be the TAAMS Timber Money Book which will not be included in the next release, but we have been given a preview of the

(Continued on page 8)

BIA Forestry and Wildland Fire Management

by Peter Wakeland

(Continued from page 7)

development and are excited that this is moving closer to release.

We will be submitting our FY23 TAAMS forestry training plan at the next TCMB meeting. In addition to Introductory and Advanced TAAMS Forestry courses, we are planning to add a 1.5-day TAAMS Forestry Management Overview course in FY 23. These courses will be offered after the start of the calendar year.

Year End Reporting: Accurate reporting of accomplishments and program needs are vital to the Division of Forestry and Wildland Fire Management for reporting program metrics to Congress, the Office of Management and Budget, the Department of the Interior, to senior Indian Affairs leadership, and others. This data is used to justify our Forestry budget to the President, and factors into funding formulas for forestry project work. Please assist your Agencies and Regions in meeting their end of fiscal year reporting deadlines.

The deadline for regions to submit the FY2022 Forest Health Protection Accomplishment Reports to Central Office is October 3, 2022. The Forest Development, Forest Management Inventory and Planning, Woodland Management, Timber Harvest Initiative, and Forest Timber Accomplishments Reports are due on November 10, 2022.

Funding and Position Analysis: The FY2019 Funding and Position Analysis is the sixth survey of the Indian Forestry Program funding and staffing levels spanning the past 30 years. The BIA Summary of Findings Report has been developed and is currently in review. The report evaluates the state of the program in FY2019 and examines



Caleb Cain, Annual Leave Relaxation

national trends over time. Once finalized, the report will be used to share these findings and to highlight the critical resources needed to provide high-quality forest management services to tribes.

Timber Team: In FY2022, the Timber Team spent 30 weeks traveling and between driving and flying to locations, they traveled over 32,000 miles and successfully completed forestry work for Tribes throughout the nation. Sixteen Tribes received support that included over 3,500 acres prepared for timber management with an estimated volume of over 20 million board feet; gathered timber cruise data on 778 plots; measured 120 stand exams; remeasured 169 continuous forest inventory plots; and mapped tribal forestlands using GIS on 132,000 acres.

These accomplishments don't come easy. The Team works in all types of field conditions including steep terrain, winter conditions, insect infested woods, and poison ivy just to name a few.

The Timber Team has five vacant positions and planning to have these filled by the end of the calendar year. Due to the shortage of staff, here is a list of the Timber Team's tentative scheduled for the remaining 2022 calendar year:

- Sep 26 - Oct 5: Rosebud Reservation GPR (fire salvage)
- Oct 17 - 29: Available for fire salvage (minimal staff available)
- Nov 14 - 18: Available for fire salvage (minimal staff available)
- Nov 19 - 27: Thanksgiving Holidays (no traveling)
- Nov 28 - Dec 9: Chehalis Reservation, NWR (stand exams)
- Dec 17 - Jan 3: Christmas/New Year's Holidays (no traveling)

We are seeking proposals for FY23 and federal/tribal staff that would like to work with the Timber Team on any assignment this year. Talk to your Regional Forester if you would like to join the team for any of the planned trips, we have scheduled this year. It would be a great way to gain additional experience and it will also help us since we are short staff at this time.

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>. The DOF is seeking proposals for calendar year 2023 and federal/tribal staff that would like to work with the Timber Team on any upcoming assignment.

(Continued on page 9)

BIA Forestry and Wildland Fire Management

by Peter Wakeland

(Continued from page 10)

Forest Health: The BIA Department of Forestry is working with the US Forest Service to distribute approved requests to Central Office. Central Office will make funding available as soon as accounts have been set up. There are four tribes within BIA that have been approved in FY22 and project totals are \$263,721.00. Examples of forest health projects include insect and disease infestations, mistletoe, blister rust, oak wilt, sudden oak death, etc. Project requests for FY23 are due to Central Office by October 3rd. 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: The Branch of Forest Resources and Planning (BOFRP) is now the Branch of Forest Inventory and Planning or FIP, which is pronounced as the individual letters F-I-P, rather than “fip.” The name change was designed to better reflect our Branch’s primary focus on the design, implementation, and analysis of forest inventories.

FIP Projects: The FIP team is actively working on seven forest inventory projects and is busy preparing the CFI materials for two CFI projects that will begin before the year ends. The team is also cleaning and processing four projects that were returned to FIP after the tribe had completed their data collection. In addition, the team is also providing support on 38 projects currently at the Region, Agency, and Tribe in collecting data, writing their FIA, or cleaning up data to return to BOFRP. If you

have questions or are looking for a status update for your forest inventory, please visit the FIP Planning Tool on Microsoft Teams or send a request to Dawn.Patterson@bia.gov to be added to the Teams channel. The FIP inventory foresters must keep the FIP Planning Tool updated daily to keep the region, agency and tribes informed.

Field Name Standardization: FIP compiled, analyzed, and provided recommendations on CFI Master Database Plot, Tree, and Regeneration data collection fields for discussion and review among the Inventory and Planning Operations Group (IPOG). At the end of each assessment for Plot, Tree, and Regeneration tables, a final document was prepared with FIP and IPOG data field recommendations, standardized codes, and the date IPOG approved. Each document was submitted for national review among the Regions and any additional comments and concerns were addressed. The standardization is a collaboration effort with IPOG to streamline the CFI process and ultimately facilitate the FIP application enhancements.

Staff Updates: FIP hired on two new GS-11 foresters, Jesse Wooten, and Christopher Lacroix, who both started in September. Before joining FIP, Jesse was a Natural Resources Specialist with Jefferson County Open Space based in Golden, Colorado, where he helped create and conduct their forest inventory program and wrote prescriptions for forest health and wildfire mitigation treatments. Jesse received a master’s degree in Forest Sciences from Colorado State University in 2021, during which time he studied post-fire forest recovery across mixed fire severity and forest types. Before joining FIP, Christopher La-

Croix was an Urban & Community Forester with 10+ years of experience working in the public and private sectors. FIP also conducted interviews for three GS-13 positions and have selected candidates for all three positions.

BRANCH OF WILDLAND FIRE MANAGEMENT

Fuels Management: In collaboration with U.S. Geological Survey, Rocky Mountain Research station and Indian Country, we continue to incorporate the utilization of new technological advancements for quantifying wildfire risk spatially and temporally.

BIA has invested in Light Detecting and Ranging (Lidar) at five reservations to improve strategic placement of treatments that are critical components of fuels management to maximize cost effectiveness, efficiency, and risk reduction. Lidar can provide cost effective strategic landscape-level planning that supports multi-year integrated resource management regimes. Fuels has also engaged Central Office Forestry and Regional Office staff with collaborative work products for the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL), Lidar and Active Management.

Fuels staff is currently exploring the development of Terrestrial Laser Scanning technology and its application for fuels management and post-wildfire recovery and will be hosting field training, in collaboration with San Carlos Apache Tribe, in June 2022.

Fuels staff has been working with the BLM and Forest Service to provide input regarding BIA Reserved Treaty Rights Lands Fuels information for their Tribal Forest Protection Act assessments and coordinated with other interagency partners and OWF

(Continued on page 10)

BIA Forestry and Wildland Fire Management

by Peter Wakeland

(Continued from page 9)

to provide insight and recommendations on the development of future reporting requirements and design of the NextGen Nation Fire Plan Operating and Reporting System.

The development of the BIA Fuels dashboard which combines national BIA Fuels Datasets/ maps/ websites in a single webpage has continued.

Post Wildfire Recovery Program:

The Cerro Pelado fire ignited on April 22, 2022, and burned 45,605 acres, impacting multiple jurisdictions including private lands and lands managed by U.S. Forest Service, National Park Service, and Bureau of Indian Affairs in New Mexico. The fire moved through Tribal trust areas, affecting 3,274 acres of Pueblo of Jemez land, 29 acres of Pueblo of Santo Domingo land and 830 acres of Pueblo de Cochiti land.

A Department of Interior Interagency Burned Area Emergency Response (BAER) Team was brought in to evaluate soil burn severity and post-wildfire threats to human life, safety, and property as well as critical natural and cultural resources, important to each Pueblo. This interdisciplinary team engaged with Tribal leadership and staff to develop a collective system of emergency treatments to reduce flooding, debris flow and erosion threats to critical values. The Team also developed burned area rehabilitation treatments to initiate the path to long-term recovery and highlighted the opportunity for Bipartisan Infrastructure Law funding to continue ecological restoration and recovery of burned lands.

In total, proposed emergency treatment funds includes \$200,000 for spring and cultural site protections, road stabilization, flood warning



Wayne Waquiu, BAER Team Forester, discusses the impacts of the Cerro Pelado fire on the Tribe's timber resource with Pueblo of Jemez' natural resources staff members

systems, and point protection and armoring. Burned area rehabilitation treatments include \$1.1 million for reforestation, invasive and noxious weed treatment, and replacement/repair of resource protection and boundary fence.

Operations: The normal seasonal progression of wildfire potential continues across the western states, but there are no active large fires on or imminently threatening Indian lands (excluding Alaska). The first summer-like period of extended hot weather has commenced over most of the southwestern U.S., and lightning risk is increasing as well. Activity on ongoing large fires in New Mexico has moderated due to less extreme weather (more cloud cover, higher RH, some scattered showers) and good progress toward containment objectives. Nonetheless, fire potential will remain substantially elevated throughout BIA's South-

west, Navajo, and Western Regions until the onset of the monsoon (expected "on time", around the end of June). Fire potential remains relatively low across most of Oklahoma into the Great Plains due to recurrent precipitation and green-up. Similarly, most areas in the Eastern Region are experiencing the lull in activity due to green fuels. In the Midwest, parts of Minnesota and northern Wisconsin have received less precipitation than normal for this time of year, but live fuels will offset fire danger. The expected early start to the fire season in California has been delayed due to timely precipitation, but parts of southern California are drying rapidly. Fire activity in Alaska escalated significantly over the past few days, with dozens of large fires burning aggressively in the western and southwest parts of the state. Several of these fires are

(Continued on page 11)

BIA Forestry and Wildland Fire Management

by Peter Wakeland

(Continued from page 10)

burning in the vicinity of Alaska Native allotments and point protection tactics are being used where needed.

Training / Workforce Development: Working in collaboration with both DOI and USDA we have moved forward a proposal to build a more holistic career training and education program. This program will focus on day job duties and be strategically designed and facilitated to intervene at the appropriate juncture of an employee's career to better their professional development, increase decision making, and potential for career advancement. The first step is a contracting out a specific competency analysis which will help to define the gaps in current training, define what training is missing and provide a roadmap to finding that missing element. This will ultimately provide our GS/Tribal employees with a complete roadmap to successful career planning and a valid continuing education model.

Wildland Fire Apprenticeship Academy (WFAP) - DWFM has recently signed the National Joint Apprenticeship Academy charter as a member. This allows us to utilize the WFAP academy which is designed to specifically target GS 3-5 current and potential employees, more quickly developing their speed to competency, and instilling professional values early in an employee's development. Tribal employees will also be able to attend in student slots when they are available. BIL funding has been proposed as a funding mechanism to enroll the first batch of BIA personnel and we are planning for up to ten enrollees for spring of 2023.

Training recently required a new course and fire qualification for our engine personnel, Engine Operator.

This was designed and implemented to further the professionalization of our engine staff which account for around 65% of BIA/Tribal fire responders. NIFC has coordinated and facilitated three geographic courses in Phoenix, Tulsa and Warm Springs and has trained over 100 current engine personnel. This number also accounts for "train-the-trainer" personnel who are now qualified to return to their respective units and facilitate this new course.

Safety: The DOI Medical Standards Program has updated the current Client Access System contracted through Comprehensive Health Services. The new contract allows for multi-factor authentication and greater security regarding Personally Identifiable Information.

A Firefighter Wellness Program has been established. Through Infrastructure Law funding, the BIA Branch of Wildland Fire will work to fill two positions. One position will be a Program Specialist and will work to coordinate interagency cooperation in Critical Incident Stress Management and Mental Health. The other position will be a Tribal Liaison position, assisting the Program Specialist and working directly with Tribal Wildland Fire Programs.

Budget: The BIA Policy Memo for FY2022 Full-year Appropriations has been signed and distributed to the Regions. Full year preparedness funding has been allocated out to Regional Offices and Self-governance Tribal programs. Regional offices will allocate funding to agency units and 638 Tribal wildland fire programs.

BIL funding has been released from the Office of Wildland Fire. This currently includes fuels fund-

ing and preparedness funding. For preparedness, BIL funding will be utilized to fill two Central Office BIA positions within the new Fire-fighter Wellness program.

Planning: Planning staff is currently supporting Southwest Region, Western Region and Alaska Region Wildland Fire Decision Support System (WFDSS). This system assists fire managers and analysts in making strategic and tactical decisions for fire incidents. It has replaced the WFSA (Wildland Fire Situation Analysis), Wildland Fire Implementation Plan, and Long-Term Implementation Plan processes with a single process that is easier to use, more intuitive, linear, scalable, and progressively responsive to changing fire complexity.

Final implementation of the new version of the National Fire Danger Rating System (NFDRSv4) are underway, which requires changes in the configurations for all Remote Automated Weather Stations (RAWS) in the Weather Information Management System (WIMS). Every RAWS should now be associated with one or more of the five new NFDRS fuel models and have critical breakpoints entered in WIMS. Many RAWS in Indian Country, along with many managed by other agencies, still need to have these final adjustments made to complete their transition. Guidance from the NWCG Fire Danger Subcommittee is forthcoming to provide an update on the status of the NFDRSv4 implementation effort and reiterate necessary steps for RAWS managers and other NFDRS-related elements.



Symposium Committee

by Howard Teasley, Jr.



Howard Teasley, Jr.



Photo of Lake Itasca 1,475 ft above the ocean where the mighty Mississippi River begins to flow 2,442 miles to the Gulf of Mexico.

2023 ITC ANNUAL SYMPOSIUM

Hautnin awas. Niimiipuu timpt. Blessing to you in our Nez Perce Language. Areas have opened new beginnings for families, teleworking, increasing your adventure beyond your personal property and traveling a crossed Indian country and further. I am happy to see we are turning a new leaf to be able to meet in person. Our Symposium Committee and the ITC Board are extremely excited to announce the **Forty-Sixth Annual Nation Indian Timber Symposium, June 12 - 15, 2023, hosted by the Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe, in Walker, Minnesota.** This year's theme is **"Landscape: The Forest Through the Trees."**

Monday, June 12: Day one begins with the **Pre-Symposium Workshops.** Workshop 1: Traditional Crafting of Rice Knockers or Lacrosse Sticks (TBA). Workshop 2: Natural Resources Conservation Service Funding & Opportunities. Workshop 3: Wildland Fire Update. Workshop 4: Tour of the Mississippi Headwater at Lake Itasca. Workshop 5: Canoe & Fishing Trip on the Mississippi River. After the workshops, individuals can start registering and receiving their materials and hit the **Host Ice Breaker.**

Tuesday, June 13: Day two starts with registration to all attendees, **Opening Ceremony,** Invocation, Posting of Colors, Welcomes, Keynote, and Featured Guest Speaker. There will be a morning break and then begin our **Panel 1: New Funding Opportunities: BIL, America the Beautiful, and Collaborative Landscape Initiatives.** The ITC Luncheon will occur, followed by the **Panel 2: Indian Forest Management Assessment Team Update** and our afternoon break which leads us into the **Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe (LLBO) Host Presentation.** Finally, the day ends with the **Host Welcome Dinner.**

Wednesday, June 14: Day three is the **LLBO Tribal Tour** including several stops and lunch. The day will end with the **General Membership Meeting.**

Thursday, June 15: Day four begins with **Updates** including ITC President's Report; DOI Office of Wildland Fire Report; BIA Forestry Report; Legislative Update; USFS Office of Tribal Relations Report; then we will have a morning break and jump into our workshops that will be starting simultaneously – **Workshop 1: Crossing Boundaries Shared Stewardship Opportunities; Workshop 2: Forest Technology Applications and**

Their Use for Assessing Fire Risk Across a Landscape; and Workshop 3: Indian Trust Asset Reform Act. We will end the day with the **Annual Business Meeting and Awards Banquet.**

Future Symposium Dates:

2024 ITC Symposium hosted by the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians, Cherokee, NC

2025 ITC Symposium hosted by the Confederated Salish & Kootenai Tribes, MT

If you have any questions, please contact Howard Teasley at (208) 621-4620 or email at howardt@nezperce.org.

Help: Intertribal Timber Council is nonprofit organization and is always looking for donations and/or sponsorships during the Annual Timber Symposium. If a Tribe or business is interested in donating, please contact ITC directly.

If you are not on the ITC mailing list and would like to receive the annual symposium agenda, please contact the ITC online at https://www.itcnet.org/get_involved/ mailing_list.html.



Operations Committee

by Tony Incashola, Jr.



Tony Incashola, Jr.

The Operations Committee meeting was held September 21, 2022, via zoom. The meeting was well attended with Tribal, BIA, and USFS representatives present. There are a few updates to share.

IFMAT IV: The Indian Forest Management Assessment Report is a congressionally mandated report performed every ten years. The report is designed to be an independent assessment of Indian forest lands by professionals and experts in the natural resource field. The fourth Indian Forest Management Assessment Team (IFMAT-IV) is led by Co-chairs John Gordon and John Sessions. As of September 2022, 40 Total tribes have participated in virtual meetings with the IFMAT team, and 37 tribes have hosted the IFMAT team for an on-site visit. This is a record number of tribes to participate in the IFMAT process. ITC would like to thank the tribes that have participated in the virtual and site visits to date.

The ITC IFMAT-IV Oversight Committee is scheduled to have a draft document to review by late November. The committee is planning to work with the IFMAT team to review and provide edits by the end of January to help ensure the project timeline stays on pace for final production in 2023. The committee will also be working on the implementa-



Confederated Salish & Kootenai Tribe IFMAT-IV onsite visit.

tion process of the finding and recommendations. An implementation plan will be developed to address the correction of findings and coordination with administration to implement the recommendations.

Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL): With the passing of the Bipartisan Infrastructure bill comes wide opportunities for tribes. Within the bill there are several wildfire resilience and forest ecosystems provisions. A total of 3.369 billion over five years for USDA and DOI that will improve 10 million acres in WUI or public drinking water source areas on federal, tribal, range land having a very high wildfire hazard potential by 2027. Including funding for wildland firefighter salaries and expenses, mechanical thinning and timber harvesting, prescribed fire, developing or improving control location and fuel breaks, contract labor crews, and post fire restoration project. And additional \$2.130 billion for USDA and DOI over five years for forest ecosystem restoration projects including stewardship contracts, TFPA, and good neighbor agreements.

BIA was successful in developing four project proposals under the ecosystem restoration funding cycle. \$37.5 million over five years for thinning and planting to restore ecological health by improving forest

health and reducing risk of resource loss to environmental factors. \$3.7 million over five years to fund tribal youth crews. \$35 million of five years to update and expand tribal greenhouses. The goal is to increase production and staffing capacity of conifer and native plant seedlings. \$11.3 million over five years to conduct tribal lidar projects.

The Ecosystem Restoration Work Group (ERWG) is updating the FY2023 guidance for the Ecosystem Restoration (ER) portion of the BIL to help tribes navigate the process easier. ERWG is also planning to release a guide showing what funding is available and what other projects have been approved last year to help tribes develop future projects for coming years. The deadlines for FY2023 proposals have not been released and ITC will help inform member tribes when we know. ERWG stated that even though the deadlines are not released the sooner you get a proposal in the better so they can assist tribes with question and submission of project.

Tribal Wood Sourcing: ITC has partnered as an advisor with Sustainable Northwest on a project that will help inform market demand for wood products sourced from tribal forestlands. Sustainable Northwest will gauge demand for timber har-

(Continued on page 14)

Operations Committee

by Tony Incashola, Jr.

(Continued from page 13)

vested on Tribal forests by connecting the sustainable building market to wood products fabricated from Tribal wood. Success will connect building projects and project teams to Tribal communities, landscapes, and mills that process tribal wood. Awareness and relationships will build ongoing interest in Tribal wood sourcing and elevate the profile of Tribal Nations. The project will look to create a list of wood products and suppliers linked to tribally managed forests for purchasers and contractors. The project will also produce a video and communications content that elevate the people, places, and management associated with tribal wood, tribal communities and forests associated with.

ITC has written on this topic in the past but needed to write an update this newsletter to inform member tribes that you may be getting an information request from Sustainable Northwest to see what product and quantity you may have available for future marketing opportunities. If you have questions, feel free to contact ITC or Sustainable Northwest.

New Wildland Firefighter pay: ITC continues to work with Office of wildland Fire and DOI to remedy the language in the BIL 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 same training and qualification standards. ITC and many tribes have sent a letter to the Secretary of the Interior and is awaiting a response and hopefully a solution to the issue. We will update on this matter in next newsletter.



Education Committee

by Nicole Stiffarm



Nicole Stiffarm

2022-2023 ITC SCHOLARSHIP ANNOUNCEMENTS

Happy Fall, ITC Family. I hope this new season finds you and yours doing well. The Education Committee is pleased to announce that the Native American Natural Research Scholarship and the Truman D. Picard Scholarship are now open and accepting applications. There

are a few key changes to each of the scholarships.

2022 Native American Natural Resource Research Scholarship:

The Research Scholarship is open to graduate students who are conducting tribally relevant research projects. **Deadline is Wednesday, November 30, 2022, 5:00 p.m. PT.** Amounts awarded will vary based on the applications received, and selected applicants will receive up to \$5,000.

2023 Truman D. Picard Scholarship:

The Picard Scholarship Program is dedicated to the support of Native American Students pursuing a higher education in forestry, wildland fire and other natural resource fields. **Deadline is Friday, March 10, 2023, 5:00 p.m. PT.** The award amounts for applicants are as follows - \$2,500 for college students (number of awards var-

ies per year); \$2,500 for graduate students and graduating college seniors that are applying or accepted for graduate school; and \$2,000 for graduating high school seniors

Both scholarship announcements are available for download on ITC's website: itcnet.org/about_us/scholarships.html

Please visit the ITC website "how-to" guide on our website to assist applicants with the Picard Scholarship application process. As always please help up spread to word on these funding sources to students in your networks.

The long planned Tribal Forestry Student Summit hosted by Northern Arizona University was held October 12-14, 2022. Stay tuned for photos of the event in our next issue.





Native American Natural Resource Research Scholarship



The Intertribal Timber Council (ITC), in partnership with the USDA Forest Service Research and Development is pleased to announce scholarship opportunities for Native American students who are planning or currently conducting tribally relevant research in a natural resource issue.

Deadline: November 30, 2022, 5:00 p.m. PST

Award: Varies, not to exceed \$5,000

Purpose: The ITC Research Scholarship is designed to support tribally relevant, natural resource-based research being conducted by Native American scholars enrolled in a graduate program.

Required Material: The ITC Education Selection Committee will review and rank only those applications that completely address the following criteria:

- A. Letter of Application:** The letter must include your name, permanent mailing address, email address and phone number. Discuss your current educational program and how the tribally relevant proposed research fits into both your degree in natural resources and your future.
- B. Resume**
- C. 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) is sufficient.
- D. Mini Research Proposal:** Please keep this concise (4 page maximum not counting budget and justification). Required elements include a) abstract stating research merit and explaining how this research is relevant to tribal natural resource interests b) timeline and methodology c) dissemination plan, including a tribal component d) budget and budget justification
- E. Letters of reference/support** from an academic advisor or committee member is required. Additionally, a **second letter of support from a tribal resource manager** or a tribal representative with tribal approval of the project or the relevancy of the project to the tribe is required.

All requested material must be received by close of business (5:00 p.m. PST) **November 30, 2022**. Incomplete applications will not be considered.

Applications should be submitted electronically by email to intertribaltimbercouncil@gmail.com.

Questions regarding the application process can be submitted to ITC by phone 503-282-4296 or email intertribaltimbercouncil@gmail.com.



INTERTRIBAL TIMBER COUNCIL

P0 BOX 11790

Portland, Oregon 97211

First Class
