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## The Oil Boom and Wildland Fire Challenges on the Ft. Berthold Reservation!

~ Jim Hamley, BIA Great Plains Regional Fire Prevention Officer  
~ Scott Baker, TAT Fuels Specialist



Oil rig and recent wildland fire.

~ Photo by Scott Baker

The recent oil boom on the Ft. Berthold Reservation (located in the Northwestern part of the state of North Dakota), has caused an increase in Fire calls for the Three Affiliated Tribes (TAT) Wildland Fire Department. An increase in oil rigs, semi-trucks, traffic, and people in the area has increased the complexities for the Tribal fire department.

Jim Hamley, the Great Plains Regional Fire Prevention Officer has been working closely with Scott Baker,

Fuels Specialist and Marle Baker, FMO from the TAT Fire Program. With these increasing challenges facing the community of Ft Berthold, it's become more important than ever for both the Tribe and the BIA to be aggressive in their fire prevention and education efforts, such as the recently held prevention and education event in New Town ND.

The Mandan, Hidatsa and Arikara Nation (MHA) hosted an International Oil and Gas Summit at the Northern

Lights Building in New Town February 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> 2012. The Three Affiliated Tribes (TAT) Fire Management Program had the opportunity to provide a Wildland Fire Prevention booth during this event.

Contact was made with approximately 400 attendees, which established contact points for future safety training to be provided by TAT Fire to oil field workers. Information regarding wildland fire prevention and contact information was provided.

Impact to the reservation due to the oil industry has been increasing in the past few years. Those impacts include an increase in large



Semi carrying fuel wrecked and burned.

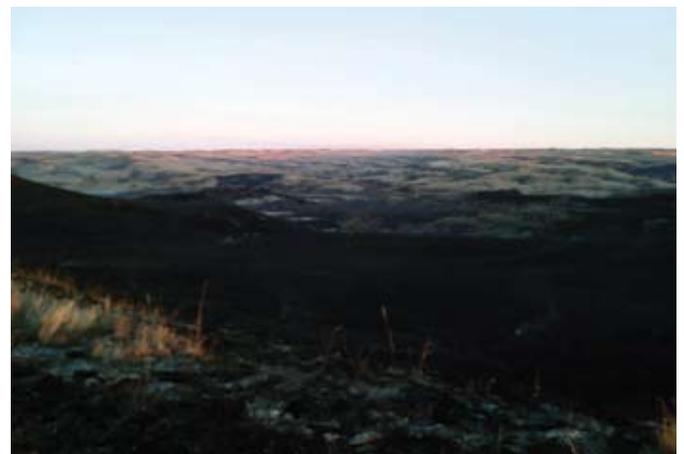
~ Photo by Scott Baker

wildland fires caused by rig work, congested traffic, dangerous roads, strains on infrastructure, loss of firefighting and other personnel due

to rig work availability year round, and traffic accidents resulting in Haz-Mat spills/fires, and/or fatalities.



Scott Baker, Rx Fuels Specialist, and Marle Baker, TAT Fire Management Officer



Lonefight fire, 600 acres.

~ Photo by Scott Baker



## Forestry

# Anchor Forests

~ Gary S. Morishima

### PROBLEM:

***We are losing the ability to manage our forests:***

- Public lands paralyzed by decades of political conflicts and legal challenges.
- Industrial forests focused on ROI, frequent ownership turnover and conversion to non-forest uses.
- Family forests challenged by generational transfers, estate taxes, and conversion pressures.



Forest Health Restoration Project on the Mescalero Apache Reservation.

- Ecological functions and forest health deteriorating; catastrophic losses from insects, disease, and wildfire are contributing to mounting environmental and economic costs.
  - Growing uncertainty amid ecosystem shifts from climate change and invasive species.
  - Poor domestic lumber markets yet increasing reliance on wood products imports.
  - Lost processing, harvesting, and transportation infrastructure and skilled human resources.
  - High unemployment and shrinking rural tax bases.
  - A growing urban population culturally removed from forestry function and policy.
- infrastructure (~200 MMBF/yr) within feasible tributary distances (~60 mile radius) from processing facilities;
  - Long-term forest management plans, supported by inventory systems, professional staff, academic engagement, and modern monitoring technologies; and
  - Institutional and operational capacity accompanied by collaboration, communication, and commitment to implementation.

Indian forests are prime candidates for **Anchor Forests**. Commitments to long-term stewardship are broadly acknowledged and, in some parts of the US, tribes own the last operating sawmills. The Intertribal Timber Council (ITC) is a 36-year-old national association of 70 forest-owning tribes and Alaska Native organizations that is guided by an Executive Board elected by the general membership. Located in Portland, Oregon, ITC seeks to establish collaborative partnerships that improve management of forests and other natural resources to sustain communities and forests. The future of all Americans (Native and non-Native) is at stake. The ITC

is exploring the concept of **Anchor Forests** as a means to help focus efforts to maintain healthy working forests across the landscape that can support strategic investments in economic and workforce infrastructure as well as essential ecological services, such as water, soils conservation, and preservation of fish and wildlife habitats that provide biological diversity. Both the Western Governors' Association and National Association of State Foresters have recently enacted resolutions acknowledging the need for cross-boundary collaboration.

#### WESTERN GOVERNORS' ASSOCIATION:

From the WGA's Forest Health and Wildfire briefing paper: "*American forests directly and positively influence the social, economic, and ecological conditions of the nation. The threats our forests face and the inadequacy of our current response to these threats have caused concern as to whether the nation's forests are sustainable.*

*"The values at risk are not trivial – a clean and healthy environment for our communities, employment and economic opportunities for our citizens, and the energy self-sufficiency of our nation ...*

*Western states are experiencing a devastating economic downturn and must work together to be prepared to respond to increased risks to life, natural resources, and property...*

*Western Governors recognize increased coordination is vital to maintaining an effective response to critical needs and can result in reduced financial impact to the taxpaying public."*

**NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF STATE FORESTERS:** "*According to the Forest Products Industry Technology Roadmap 2010 our forests remain a strategic natural resource contributing 6 percent of*

#### SOLUTION:

***Regional multi-ownership collaborations to establish Anchor Forests, which have these qualities:***

- Reasonable expectation for sustainable long-term wood and energy production at levels sufficient to support economically viable communities, competitive manufacturing, harvesting, transportation and work force



**Tribal land vs. unmanaged national forest land**

*total manufacturing gross domestic product (GDP) in 2006, placing the forest products industry on par with the automotive and plastics industries. The industry generates more than \$200 billion a year in sales and employs approximately 900,000 people earning \$50 billion in annual payroll. The industry is among the top 10 manufacturing employers in 42 states. This strong economic contribution could be grown substantially with improved markets.” NASF Resolution 2011-1.*

*“There is increasing consensus that sustaining and enhancing the health of forests in the U.S. requires a collaborative, landscape-scale approach. Forests across the nation face an increasing host of threats, including climate change, wildland fire, and insect and disease infestations. The one commonality among these threats is that they cross forest boundaries and ownerships. In order to sustainably manage forested landscapes and maximize the vital services that they provide, including*

*clean air and water, recreational opportunities, and forest products and jobs, it is crucial for all stakeholders to work together. Collaboration among those who have a stake in the future of the forests, both at the national and local levels, is a powerful tool to support and guide management needed*

*to accomplish desired outcomes. Collaborative management serves the values of society and ensures the long-term health and sustainability of all forests.” NASF Resolution 2011-2.*

**ITC needs your help** to revitalize forest infrastructure in tribal and other forest-dependent communities. ***Anchor Forests*** can provide the context necessary to evaluate opportunities for investment in infrastructure and new technology, economic development, international trade, niche markets, carbon credits, environmental services, certification, green building standards, product research and development, eco-cultural tourism, stewardship contracting, and more.

To be successful, ***Anchor Forests*** must be carefully selected and implemented in a manner that can bring diverse concerns together to garner committed support. As a starting point, we suggest that the USDA Forest Service convene a meeting of representative groups such as ITC, Western



**Healthy forests grow timber and antlers**

Governors Association, the National Association of State Foresters, the Society of American Foresters, the American Forest Foundation, as well as stakeholder representatives from private industry, research communities, NGOs engaged in forestry and others that can and will participate in honest dialogue towards innovative and responsible solutions to the crises confronting America's forests.

## Tribal Veterans: Ten-Hut

~ Jim Erickson, Fire Technical Specialist, Intertribal Timber Council

For military veterans, finding meaningful, gainful employment when they return to their communities can be a difficult challenge. With soaring veteran unemployment rates and troop draw downs, the need to find ways to "Put Boots on the Ground" is becoming ever more critical.

Veterans for Green Jobs, a national Denver-based nonprofit organization, has launched Veterans Green Force (VGF), an outreach, recruitment and placement program exclusively designed for military veterans. VGF provides veterans with training in areas such as construction and building for energy efficiency and conservation; renewable and clean energy; natural resources and conservation; environmental remediation and response; and sustainable agriculture, and connects them with green sector employers.

VGF relies on strategic partnerships with private businesses, government agencies, nonprofit organizations, professional associations and educational institutions that offer jobs or training programs to military veterans. With key startup funding from the Call of Duty Endowment

Pilot projects build upon the understanding that Indian forestlands are *Anchor Forests*, always to be cared for and never to be sold, however these forests cannot survive as islands. Other landowners and process facilities will be needed if sustainable landscapes are to be achieved.

and Walmart, VGF aims to connect with 1,000 veterans and place at least 30 percent of them into full-time green sector jobs by mid-2013. VGF provides a path for young Native American military veterans to continue to serve their country and communities by working in areas that provide long-term economic, social and environmental benefits.

A sub-program, Veterans Fire Corps (VFC), may be of particular interest to returning tribal veterans because of the long history of Native American involvement in fire crews. VFC is a collaborative initiative that is targeted at training veterans to protect our public lands from the threat of wildfire. Veterans work as part of a crew, receive training, certificates, and a small living stipend. Initial project work generally includes introductory fuels reduction work, leadership training, and some exposure to fire suppression activities. The experience and training provided through VFC are designed to prepare program participants for positions as wildland firefighters, allowing them to earn certifications and compete for federal jobs leveraging their veteran hiring preference. Opportunities to participate in VFC are available either for tribes interested in forming crews or individuals.

For information on training opportunities or requirements for

### THE TIME TO ACT IS NOW.

*"Tribal and indigenous peoples'... lifestyles can offer modern societies many lessons in the management of resources in complex forest, mountain, and dryland ecosystems." World Commission on Environment and Development. 1987. Our Common Future. p.12*

participation, training and work experience, please contact the individuals listed below.

Tribes seeking assistance in establishing VFC crews with all or many veterans should contact John Toth, Director of Veterans Programs, Veterans Green Jobs at 720-236-1316 or [john.toth@veteransgreenjobs.org](mailto:john.toth@veteransgreenjobs.org).

Individual Tribal veterans interested in learning more about VFC should contact Mr. Garrett Reppenhagen at 719-235-7030. Garrett can tell you about openings on currently established crews in your part of the country or some place you long to visit. Advertisements for established crews will come out about two weeks prior to the starting date. Interested individuals should express their intentions early.

## 2012 National Forestry and Fire Conference

~ Faline Haven, Forester

The Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) Division of Forestry and Wildland Fire National Indian Forestry and Wildland Fire Conference was held in San Diego, CA from March 6-8, 2012. The theme of this year's biennial conference was "The

Changing Climate: People, Land and Resources.” This conference is held every two years and is designed to share information, brainstorm ideas, and promote professional, effective and efficient management of Tribal resources. A total of 315 participants attended the conference (209 BIA, 99 Tribal, and Other Federal 7).

Bill Downes, Chief Forester stated: *“the conference theme was selected because we are seeing changes in all aspects of our program. We are experiencing major personnel changes with retirements and are consistently challenged to recruit the best talent to fill vacancies, while our ability to develop existing staff in an era of limited training budget continues to frustrate. Major changes are occurring in land ownership due to consolidation efforts and land settlements and purchases, resulting in significantly increased forested trust acres that we now have to manage. ‘Resources’ was selected as part of the theme because declining timber and wood fiber markets have significantly impacted our ability to manage the land. Attempting to manage land while*

*dealing with changing conditions associated with insects, disease, catastrophic fire, and restricted budget add to the complexity of our jobs. That is why it continues to be important to pursue partnerships that provide both technical and financial assistance for land management.”*

The conference provided updates and presentations from Mike Black, BIA Director; Bryan Rice, BIA Deputy Director Trust Services; James Burckman, Director, BIA Office of Human Capital Management; Amy Dutschke, BIA Regional Director, Pacific Region; William Walker, BIA Regional Director, Southwest Region; Dr. Glenda Humiston, California State Director, USDA Rural Development; Jonny Bear Cub, Director of Business Development, Native Energy, Inc.; Dr. Linda Nagel, Professor of Silviculture, Michigan Technological University; and Dr. Gary Morishima, Technical Advisor to the Quinault Indian Nation and the Intertribal Timber Council.

In addition to these general session presentations, a total of fifty four (54) forestry and fire management



breakout sessions were offered providing both technical information and program updates. One of the main objectives of the conference was to brainstorm

findings and recommendations related to six (6) forestry and wildland fire issues, using expert panels and the audience. The panels included Forest Products Markets and Economics; Forest and Fire Ecology Impacts on the Planning Process; Partnerships for Successful Landscape Level Projects; Land Consolidation Impacts to Staff and Budgets; Workforce Recruitment, Development, and Succession Planning; and, Managing Wildland Fire. A team is currently being formed that will analyze the findings and recommendations and develop an action plan addressing how best to move forward regarding these important issues.

Bill Downes stated *“overall the meeting went extremely well. The panel sessions and breakouts received very positive feedback from participants with the only negative being we did not allow enough time.”*

We would like to express appreciation for all the presenters, moderators, facilitators and participants for making this meeting a success. As one evaluation form stated *“Great Conference! 2006 Spokane, 2008 Albuquerque, 2010 Phoenix, 2012 San Diego, and 2014 Hawaii?”*. It is not too early to start sending your input to Bill Downes regarding the next conference venue and theme.



View from the conference hotel

## Fuels

## Greenville Rancheria

~ Beth Rose Middleton, Assistant Professor,  
Native American Studies University of  
California, Davis

In the mountains of northeastern California, the Greenville Indian Rancheria Fire & Fuels Crew has been thinning for fire safety, enhancing culturally important plants, and training a new cadre of Native firefighters.

The crew currently consists of seven members (six of which are Maidu), and works on Forest Service, private, and trust land. The crew was established in 2009 and won a High Achievement Award from the US Forest Service on the Bar Fire in 2010. As of 2010, the crew had established interagency agreements with the US Forest Service and the Bureau of Indian Affairs to be able to fight fire with crews from those agencies, on agency lands. While summer 2011 was a relatively slow fire season, the crew was dispatched to work with the Plumas National Forest crews on small fires and stand-by procedures in September and October 2011.

### Beargrass Burn

The fall season affords opportunities to do traditional burning of culturally important plants. For several years, weavers have been requesting that the Forest Service implement a cultural burn on an important beargrass gathering site located on USFS land just one mile southeast of Canyon Dam. Beargrass is traditionally burned in order to produce productive basketry material. The weavers wanted Native fire personnel to do the burn, but no local Maidu had Incident Qualification Cards or "red cards." Once the Greenville Indian Rancheria Fire & Fuels Crew was in place with the qualifications in 2009, and funding from the Plumas Resource Advisory Committee was secured in 2007,



**Greenville Rancheria firefighting crewmember Nick Garcia works on a new kind of prescription burn near Canyon Dam with Forest Service employee Megan Martinez. The project combines traditional Maidu stewardship with the policies and practices of the federal agency. \***

Greenville Indian Rancheria Asst. Fire Chief Danny Manning met with the US Forest Service and developed plans for the burn. Maidu Frenchie Mullen, whose mother was born nearby in Big Meadows/Lake Almanor, served as the honored elder on the project, and Forest Service personnel included Burn Boss Ryan Bauer, Mike Donald, Megan Martinez, and Engine 20.

The entire Greenville Indian Rancheria Fire & Fuels crew participated in the burn, igniting the beargrass without the use of blow torches or lighter fuel. Crew members used lighters to ignite



**Greenville Rancheria firefighter Mike Savala watches while fellow crewmember Kalija Steele tries to puff flames to life the old-fashioned way, without using gas or propane torches. Maidu basket makers who use this bear grass must first put it in their mouths to soften it, like a sax player does a reed. Chemicals are unwanted here.\***

the dead grass near the base of each plant by hand, letting the fire creep among the plants and along the slope. While it was clear immediately after the burn that the objectives for burning live and dead beargrass foliage were met, whether the pliability of the foliage was enhanced will be determined in a Spring 2012 field trip to the site with tribal members.

### Maidu Stewardship Project

The Maidu Stewardship Project involves a ten-year stewardship pilot contract between the non-profit Maidu Culture and Development Group (MCDG) and the US Forest Service. The goal is to implement traditional ecological knowledge to steward and enhance 1,530 acres of Plumas National Forest land on the edge of Greenville, and an additional 500 acres of the Lassen National Forest around Homer Lake. When it was selected by the USFS in 1997, the project was one of 22 pilot demonstration projects around the nation, with a vision to "... bring the land back to the people and the people back to the land."

The Stewardship contract began in 2004 and, due to miscommunication between the subcontractor doing timber falling and thinning on the site and the US Forest Service, the work was suspended and the contract went into extended modifications. Funding for fuels thinning on the project available from the Plumas Resource Advisory Committee went un-used until Manning heard about the project from then-MCDG Chairman Dana Brown in 2010. Manning then met with the MCDG in order to see if the Greenville Indian Rancheria Fire & Fuels Crew could subcontract the work and re-start the project on the land. In 2010 and early 2011, Manning worked to meet the Forest Service's specifications to get Workman's Compensation Insurance, registration with the Department of Labor, and ensure that the crew consisted of certified sawyers. In Summer 2011, the Crew was able to start work on the project, working on the north side of Highway 89 outside of Greenville. The crew thinned and piled for fire safety, and tended culturally important plants.



Woodcarver Pete Echols shows fire crew members Don Howell and Mike Savala how to debark a cedar tree so that the bark comes off in a large sheet that can be used to cover a traditional Maidu home with an insulating layer that does not leak in the rain.\*

In summer 2011, the crew obtained agency permission to fell a large, dying cedar tree for cultural uses. The Crew worked with Maidu carver Pete Echols to de-bark the tree and salvage wood for culturally themed carvings. The bark will be used to construct demonstration bark houses on the project or a nearby site.

As of Fall 2011, the Crew had completed 97 acres on the project, and has 50 acres yet to complete of roadside thinning within the first of four units. Good communication between the Rancheria crew, led by

Manning, and US Forest Service personnel, including Curtis Yokum, who monitors and inspects the project, have helped the MSP to succeed. The project will continue well into the 2012 field season. In 2012, the Greenville Rancheria crew plans to collaborate with a fire crew from the Susanville Indian Rancheria, thus providing culturally relevant work for two Native crews on the Stewardship Project site.

**Community**

Aside from these ongoing fire, fuels, and cultural projects, the crew is involved in outreach and education. In Spring 2011, BIA Pacific Region Fuels Module Leader Arnold DeGarmo and Manning instructed a Basic 32 class for beginning Native firefighters. In this class, there were 12 participants, and 7 graduated with red cards, authorizing them to work on fire crews throughout the state. In Summer 2011, Manning and Kalija Steele of the Greenville Rancheria crew worked



Assistant Fire Chief Danny Manning is able to keep a limb he finds on a thinning job. He says the wood will be perfect to use in making a cradleboard for his future son.\*

with Soledad Holguin Fire Prevention Specialist of the BIA (Pacific Region) to offer a hands-on educational session to 35 children at the Roundhouse Council Indian Education Center Traditional Ecological Knowledge summer camp. The youth learned about firefighting careers and equipment, tried on firefighting gear, heard the true story of Smokey the Bear, and met Smokey himself.



Finished with their traditional blessing of the land with song and sage, Mountain Maidu representatives Clara Fritz, Ben Cunningham and honored elder Franklin "Frenchie" Mullen meet with Forest Service fuel technician Megan Martinez and forest ecologist Kyle Merriam before younger members of the crew spark a low-intensity underburn in hopes of enhancing the bear grass habitat.\*



Greenville Rancheria fire crewmembers build fire lines alongside Forest Service firefighters and have trained hard to earn their place in agency dispatches to wildland fires.\*



Chief Danny Manning and instructors

**Next Steps**

The Greenville Rancheria Fire & Fuels Crew will continue to implement local, culturally relevant fire and fuels reduction projects in the Maidu homeland, and to work with the USFS, the BIA, and other agencies on local, state, and national fires. The Crew is working on upgrading equipment, with a goal to acquire a new engine



Greenville Rancheria fire crewmembers Kalija Steele, front, Don Howell, Sam Harwood, Shane Kelley and Mike Savala enjoy their work to benefit people and the environment. Besides fighting wildland fires, they also work at a combination of traditional and modern fuel thinning jobs on the forest, at homes of elders and on tribal lands. They also work with kids at summer camp. Photo taken on the Nighthawk fire.\*

in 2012, and to train additional tribal members in firefighting and fuels work.

\* Photo captions courtesy of Alicia Knadier, Plumas News, Indian Valley Editor

# Northern Cheyenne Hires Prevention Officer

- ~ Merlin Sioux, Fire Prevention Officer, Northern Cheyenne Agency
- ~ David Peters, WUI/Prevention Specialist, Great Plains and Rocky Mountain Regions



Merlin Sioux became the fire prevention education program lead in mid January 2012. He replaces his brother Albert who moved over to the Forestry department at Northern Cheyenne Agency. Merlin has been involved in wildland fire management since 1980. When he started his fire career 32 years ago he worked in the fire warehouse and with hand crews. As an engine foreman he was an ICT3 responsible for initial attack on the reservation. He was the tribal fire marshal and fire chief for 12 years before coming back to the BIA as their lead dispatcher.

Mr. Sioux was raised and lives on a ranch near Lame Deer, Montana, which his father acquired over many years. His dad worked for the BIA for 48 years as an Equipment Operator Supervisor. Like many ranchers in southeastern Montana, Merlin likes to hunt and fish. As a pilot he enjoys flying airplanes in the region. He went to school at St. Labre and graduated from Colstrip High School. He has two sons in college, one in Wyoming at Sheridan College, who is studying diesel mechanics and welding, while working on his pilot's license. His other son is studying music and arts at Haskell Indian Nations University in Kansas.

The most significant human caused wildfire issues on his reservation are: juveniles, arson and equipment use. Merlin is looking forward to another page in his natural resources career, and feels he can make a difference in his community's wildland fire education outreach efforts. He feels the Youth FireSetter Intervention (YFI) program should be able to reduce youth caused fires in his communities.

## Prevention

## Multiple Agencies Gather for Juvenile Fire Setter Intervention Workshop

~ Kip Kemak, Fire Prevention and Mitigation Specialist, Nez Perce Tribe  
~ Jeff Handel, Fire Management Officer, Nez Perce Tribe

Youth fire setters are a problem in Indian Country. Despite the high occurrence level, there is no tribe or agency in the NW Region with an established program to decide if a youth needs fire education intervention or needs to be referred to other community agencies. Not only is there a need to educate the youth fire setters, we must educate fire management personnel, tribal councils and tribal members.

As a response to this issue, tribal, state and local fire personnel gathered in Lewiston, Idaho for a three day Youth Fire Setter Intervention (YFSI) training hosted by the Nez Perce Tribe and held at the Lewiston Fire Department. Daria Day, fire prevention educator under

contract with the BIA, taught the course. The YFSI training program: (Module 1) defines the YFSI problem, (Module 2) recognizes the steps necessary to start a program, (Module 3) identifies the intervention process, and (Module 4) discusses some of the legal issues. The YFSI process starts with the child being identified through the fire investigation, or in many cases, brought in by a parent or guardian. A screening process is then used to determine what level of intervention the child needs. The child may go through the juvenile court system or be required to attend fire safety education.

The screening process (Module 1) Daria taught was developed by the State of Oregon and is widely used throughout the country. It's comprised of a series of questions with points attached to each question for both the child and the parents. The total amount of points at the end of the screening process determines the level of intervention needed. It's crucial getting these kids the help they need since the problem could escalate into more dangerous behavior down the road.

A YFSI coalition is developed to work with the child and the parents. Members of the coalition may include (but not limited to) schools, wildland and/or structure fire services, law enforcement, mental health services, health and public health services and tribal council/court representation. It's beneficial to have a YFSI coalition formed prior to needing them. The coalition would help intervene with a child or adolescent who

has been found to be using fire in an unsafe manner. This leads into another learning point from the class that the terms "Good Fire" and "Bad Fire" are no longer used. Fires are now explained to children as "Safe" and "Unsafe."

The class not only provided a great networking opportunity but it also allowed members of a local fire prevention coop to share ideas and resources. A few of the students are already members of the North Central Idaho Fire Prevention Coop which includes federal, state and local fire agencies from Latah, Nez Perce, Clearwater, Lewis and Idaho counties. They meet once a month to plan and schedule events and share fire information from their area. The resources that this network of individuals already possesses, combined with the suggested non-fire personnel, will help build the foundation of a local YFSI coalition. By the end of class, students were discussing what non-fire personnel would be a benefit to a coalition in their area. Eventually, the Nez Perce Tribe will have a network of available coalition members sharing their expertise and playing an important role in fire events involving juveniles.

Attendees were fire prevention personnel from the Nez Perce Tribe, Yakama Nation, Spokane Tribe, Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs, Wind River Agency, Idaho Department of Lands, Lewiston Fire Department, Clarkston Fire Department and Moscow Fire Department.



Front Row: Steve Gregor, Lewiston FD; Len Diaz, NWRO; Jeff Handle, Nez Perce Tribe; Kip Kemak, Nez Perce Tribe; Craig Collins, Nez Perce Tribe; Julian Sorrell, Lewiston FD.

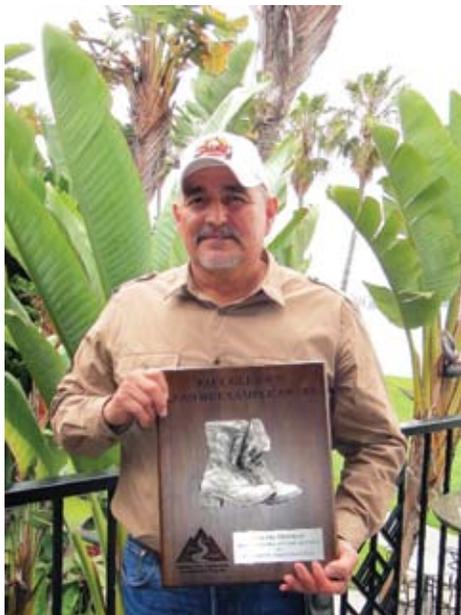
Back row: Dave Bell Sr., Wind River Agency; Gary Peters, Yakama Nation; Grant Denison II, Spokane Tribe; Rolin Heytvelt, Clarkson FD; Jim Babino, Clarkston FD; Joe Williams, Moscow FD; Daria Day, YFSI Instructor; David Summers, Idaho Department of Lands (IDL); Tony Holliday, Warm Springs Tribe; Racine Johnson, Warm Springs Tribe  
~ Photo by Kip Kemak



## Training

# Leading by Example

~ Ron Miller and Leon Ben, Jr.\*\*



Ralph with the Paul Gleason "Lead by Example Award" in San Diego

~ Photo by Erica Enjady

*"There is no amount of formal training or education that can replicate the knowledge gained by interaction with a mentor who has experienced countless days on the fireline." -Craig Cook*

Leading by example is an active statement, not limited to the past, but rather a continuing pattern of living that encourages others to follow. It is a statement of belief where the person's actions demonstrate their lifestyle. In fire circles, it is often tied into the triad standards of duty, respect and integrity. Does duty compel a mentor to share his or her experiences with the next generation? Does respect for the upcoming leaders and the desire to build a team push a mentor to share gained knowledge? Or does someone's integrity lead them to set the example for others to follow?

The Paul Gleason Lead by Example Award doesn't answer those questions, but was named for an individual who exemplified the strong desire to shape the next generation of firefighters. Paul Gleason was a well-respected long-term Hotshot Superintendent, hero of the deadly Dude Fire in Arizona, recipient of the Golden Pulaski Lifetime Achievement Award, and father of LCES, a well-known acronym reminding firefighters that Lookouts, Communications, Escape Routes, and Safety Zones are essential.

Ralph Thomas from the BIA Fort Apache Agency in Arizona was recently honored with this prestigious award during the 2012 National Indian Forestry and Wildland Fire Management Conference. The presentation was made by BIA Fire Director Lyle Carlile.

Ralph is one of only two BIA-nominated employees to have received this important recognition. Craig Cook, Deputy Training Officer for the BIA at NIFC who nominated Ralph for this honor, made the following observations:

*"Ralph's contribution to fire is evidenced by over 25 years of actively leading and mentoring firefighters. Ralph loves the challenge that fire brings and that love of engagement with fire is contagious to those that work with or for him. In recent years, looking for additional ways to engage with fire, Ralph helped develop the BIA's National Fire Mentoring Program. The Fire Mentoring Program is a rather straight forward program that brings together future fire leaders from all over the country to conduct burns and provide suppression support in the winter months to the Seminole Tribes of Florida. Ralph served as a Mentor/Field Coordinator in the inaugural year 2008 and has led mentoring groups every year*

*since. Ralph is a significant role model for firefighters in the BIA and Tribal Programs."*

Ralph has worked for the BIA Fort Apache Agency for many years with his first season occurring during the United States bicentennial in 1976. He must have felt patriotic because he then served as a paratrooper in the Army's 82<sup>nd</sup> Airborne until 1980. In 1980 and 1981 Ralph returned home and worked seasonally in helitack and then he worked as the Fort Apache Hotshot Foreman for the next two seasons. This was followed by an appointment as the Fort Apache Hotshot Superintendent from 1984 to 1993. Ralph turned this new hotshot crew (the first in Indian Country) into a top notch hotshot crew (see Fort Apache Hotshots Celebrate Silver Anniversary in Volume 8 of Smoke Signals). Ralph is currently the Supervisory Fuels Technician at Fort Apache, a position that he has held since 1993.

During this long career in Fire Management Ralph has also served on Type 1 Incident Management Teams as a Division Supervisor for eight years and as an Air Tactical Group Supervisor Trainee until he received



Observing a new "crop" of burners in Florida

~ Photo by Erica Enjady

his full qualifications in that capacity. There hasn't been a lot of "down time" in Ralph's career. For example, he is now working towards qualifying for the GS-401 job series by attending Northern Arizona University's Fire Ecology and Management Certificate Program in Flagstaff, Arizona.

According to a NIFC newsletter report about the 2012 Lead By Example Awards "The scope of Ralph's mentoring will be felt for years to come as he continues to train others to conduct themselves with respect,

*professionalism, and leadership as students of fire."*

Smoke Signals joins Indian Country as a whole in congratulating Ralph Thomas on a real and continuing pattern of *leading by example*. \*The Paul Gleason Lead by Example Award recognizes individuals and groups in the wildland fire community who stand out because they are leaders, mentors, and innovators. Recipients of the award consistently practice and model established

*wildland fire leadership values and principles that were created to define effective leadership and help guide leaders' decisions and actions.*  
--- NWCG Talking Points

\*\* Ron Miller is a Supervisory Forester at the Fort Apache Agency in Whiteriver, AZ

\*\* Leon Ben, Jr. is the Fire Management Officer for the BIA Western Regional Office in Phoenix, AZ



M-410 Students and Instructors

# Becoming an Effective Facilitative Instructor

~ Steve Jackson, Wildland Fire Operations Specialist, Salt Lake BLM

The BIA sponsored its 10th annual NWCG M-410, Facilitative Instructor training January 9-13, 2012 in San Diego, California at the Catamaran Resort.

This course meets the requirements referenced in the NWCG Field Manager's Course Guide to instruct 200 level or higher courses. In addition to helping one become compliant with yet another federal policy, this course also focuses on ways to improve:

- The quality of instruction at the local, geographic, and national level;
- Interaction with other teachers and course coordinators in a cadre environment;
- Skills for conducting meetings,

briefings, After Action Reviews; and

- Any communication scenario where information sharing within dynamic groups is the key.
- This year's course continued the tradition of combining individuals from a variety of fire positions and locations from the wildfire community in an arena where they are encouraged to try techniques and methods that reach beyond fire topics. Furthermore, Tribal and Bureau employees not working in Fire Management are also encouraged to participate.

Congratulations to the following students (featured in the photo) who successfully completed the course:

Shane Bishop ~ Tuolumne Rancheria FD  
 Jose Luis A. Madrigal ~ Tule River FD  
 Shelby S. Charley Jr. ~ Tule River FD  
 Loren McDarment ~ Tule River FD  
 Kevin McDannald ~ Tule River FD  
 Patrick Beatty ~ Fort Apache Hotshots  
 Kimo Larzelere ~ Fort Apache Hotshots  
 Anthony Sanchez ~ Fort Apache Agency  
 Reginald J. Armstrong ~ Fort Apache Agency  
 Alonzo Smith ~ Hopi Agency  
 Michael DeSpain ~ Mechoopala Indian Tribe  
 Bobby Tall Chief ~ Osage Nation  
 Kyle Mullane ~ Golden Eagles Hotshots  
 William Miles Pollack ~ Golden Eagles Hotshots  
 Kevin Akers ~ Golden Eagles Hotshots

Chad J. Webber ~ Golden Eagles Hotshots  
 Don Howell ~ Greenville Rancheria  
 Michael Savala ~ Greenville Rancheria  
 Matthew L. Austin ~ Cahuilla FD  
 Noel S. Baker ~ TAT FD  
 Lenore Lamb ~ BIA Southern Cal Agency  
 Doreen E. Gatewood ~ BIA Western Regional

**Cadre and Support**  
 Dave Koch ~ Boise, NIFC/BIA ~ Sponsor  
 Byron Alcantara ~ Sycuan Fire Department ~ Onsite Coordinator  
 Patrick Kenny ~ BLM, Salt Lake City ~ Instructor  
 Steve Jackson ~ BLM, Salt Lake City, UT ~ Instructor  
 Leon Ben ~ Phoenix, AZ ~ Instructor  
 Laurel Simos ~ Boise, NIFC/BIA ~ Instructor, Course Coordinator



Administration

**NIFC  
 Welcomes  
 David Peters!**

David Peters recently became the Budget Officer at NIFC. In 2008 he was hired as the Regional WUI/



Prevention Specialist, Great Plains and Rocky Mountain Regions. He spent seven years in Tucson on the Gila District as a Fire Mitigation Specialist for the Bureau of Land Management. Before moving to the desert he worked in forest management, where he spent six years with BLM in Medford, Oregon, and six years with the BIA for the Olympic Peninsula Agency. As a Forester he worked in timber sales administration, presales, monitoring, writing silvicultural prescriptions and burn plans. His involvement in wildfire started in Washington in 1990, where worked hand crews, helicopters, engines and in prescribed fire.

**Paula Landon  
 Budget Analyst  
 ~ NIFC!**



After serving the past 3 years as the Fuels and Budget Program Support Assistant, and the Executive Secretary for the Fuels Management Committee, Paula has joined the Budget team as a Budget Analyst.

Paula comes to the Government after serving more than 28 years with Albertsons, Inc. in Boise, Idaho. In her years with Albertsons she held various positions in the Purchasing/ Procurement area, retiring as Director of Equipment Procurement and Investment Recovery in 2008.

In 2006 she served as the Governor's representative to The Idaho Council on Indian Affairs.

After taking a one year hiatus, Paula decided to re-enter the job market doing something about which she is truly passionate. As a member of the Assiniboine Indian Tribe in Poplar, Montana, working for the BIA was her first choice. Her hope is to use the skills she has acquired over the years, to make a contribution to Indian Country.

Paula and Bill, her husband of 35 years, along with their Golden Doodle Micky, enjoy the Idaho outdoors, blue water sailing, hot rods and Boise State Football.

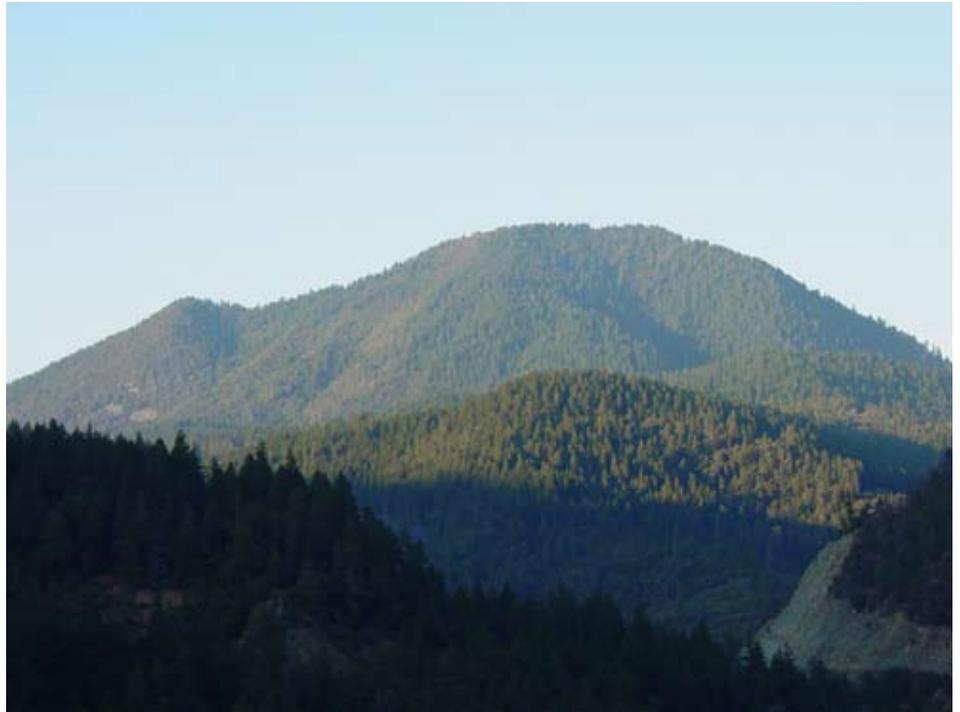
*Note from the editors of Smoke Signals: "The Creator," contributed by Bill Tripp, Karuk Tribe, has been placed in the area usually reserved for Black Snake. This cultural article is appropriate for this section of Smoke Signals and we thank Bill Tripp for his contribution. Black Snake will be back with an article soon.*

## The Creator Put Fire on the Mountain

~ Bill Tripp, Eco-Cultural Restoration Specialist, Karuk Tribe, Department of Natural Resources

*Offield Mountain was historically ignited annually until 1911 symbolizing the singeing of the widows hair to allow for mourning and to prevent more widows in the coming year. This was done by means of rolling burning logs from specific locations in sequential order over a short period of time preceding the new moon in September as an integral component of Karuk World Renewal Ceremonies. Re-vitalizing this process is a critical component of perpetuating Karuk culture and identity as people of place, while bridging the primary goals of the Cohesive Strategy.*

Long ago, when people lived in harmony with their surrounding environment, fire was deeply entwined into the native societies of the Pacific Northwest. During this time, people had learned to use fire for many reasons. One of these reasons was to enhance the quality and quantity of basketry materials. There was an abundance of fire dependent cultural use plants that were used not only for baskets but as critical food sources and ingredients for medical remedies and fertilizer.



Offield Mountain

~ Photo by Bill Tripp

Other uses of fire included maintenance of forage for deer and other wildlife, managing insect infestations and providing periods of inversion cooling to enhance survival of anadromous fish; to pre-treat areas to check fire spread for the protection of village communities and prevent unwanted spread to the adjacent use areas of identifiable family groups; and to guide lightning ignitions in the interest of benefitting site specific resources when it naturally occurred upon the landscape.

Village communities during this time were uniquely adapted to living with fire. Cultural uses of fire were a part of every day life. Individuals would spend a good portion of their life just gathering wood for heating and cooking. In the fire adapted ecosystems that existed during that time, people would walk in excess of ten miles a day in order to find enough wood to carry home. The human population had achieved true balance in their interaction with ecological processes.

In the early 1900's strict fire suppression policies were introduced. During this era, fire was seen by some as a negative influence on the forests as it was harming to the young conifer trees that were the primary focus of management agencies. Not only was there the enactment of the new fire policies, but there were also programs established to eradicate porcupines, gophers, and other critical components of fire adapted landscape communities. These creatures have a purpose just as fire has a purpose. It just so happens that their purposes are directly linked to one another. As human interacted fire regimes burned through the forest, they maintained resilience and function within a continuum of balanced ecological processes.

For example, porcupines helped to weaken younger conifers to ensure fire would impact them in a manner that augmented correlating habitat needs. They would also coppice the ends of the oak branches in a

manner that enhanced tree health, vigor and production of acorns. The gophers reduced the seedlings and aerated the soil for healthy root growth and water penetration. Humans ensured fire returned in a consistent interval and/or intensity to maximize the interactive maintenance and production of food chain resources critical for supporting the population of all components of the fire adapted communities concerned.

After nearly a century of effective exclusion policies, and the correlating fear of fire, being deeply ingrained into the societal structure of today, we are faced with a whole new set of dilemmas, issues, problems, and barriers to success. Under the direction of the Natural Fire Plan, and Federal Land Management and Enhancement Act, we are faced with a task that will take well more than a century to effectively implement. This charge includes restoration and maintenance of fire resilient landscapes, creation of fire adapted communities and response to fire as the three primary goals we need to address across the entire Nation.

It will be important to remember that humans are only a component of fire adapted communities. These communities are inclusive of all species that interact with or respond to landscape process, function, and components of diversity. Through scalable human community collaborative efforts to restore and maintain balance between component interactions for achievement of resilient landscape dynamics, we can effectively augment progress toward our goals as a societal norm.

In strategically re-vitalizing the dynamics associated with pre-

European human interacted natural disturbance regimes, we can re-establish the functional purpose of why the creator put fire on the mountain. In creating a functional bridge through the three primary goals, we can restore this purpose, while protecting our homes, supporting wildlife habitat, enhancing our forest resources, enhancing our water resources, mitigating the effects of climate change, maintaining cultural identities, as well as reduce the need for emergency spending over time.

We build this bridge on a foundation of traditional ecological knowledge, western science, and the associated experience of intergenerational cumulative observation. The mission of the Karuk Tribe Department of Natural Resources is to protect, promote, and preserve the cultural/natural resources and ecological processes upon which the Karuk People depends. Within the context of principals that can be derived from above, iterative learning is a vital component of adapting interaction with ecological processes through time and change.

Karuk culture has experienced major change, so has the quality and quantity of the resources upon which we depend. We wish to ensure our cultural integrity remains intact in perpetuity, but some institutional barriers remain that limit our ability to realize the full potential of this effort. We have been developing partnerships with tribes, federal and state agencies, non governmental organizations, academic institutions, international associations, and individuals for quite some time. We believe the

time has come to institutionalize our cultural background as a formal foundation of our future, so we can share the stories and associated outcomes of our successes, failures, and adaptations relating to this endeavor to a broader audience.

The Karuk Tribe believes that these partnerships are critical to completing the intergenerational tasks at hand. Our partnerships are getting stronger and some collaborative efforts are improving. Yet there is still a critical need for programmatic base funding in order to achieve effective intergovernmental coordination. Thereby enabling long term adaptive capacities of tribal and nontribal communities within our aboriginal homelands and achieving true cohesion.

Having diverse local workforce capacities for planning, implementation, and coordinated research/monitoring of strategic managerial practices will enable a set of specialized local workforce capacities to emerge with intimate knowledge of the geographic area in which they work. This specialized capacity will enable human communities to respond quickly to wildland fires as they occur, and will know the when, where, why, and how associated with putting fires out; letting it burn; pre-planning and pre-treatment; re-ignition of suppressed fires within the natural return interval; and achievement of site specific resource benefits, while maintaining the ability to move unexpectedly, and in pre-planned situations between programmatic activities and emergency assignments.



## Thanks!

Thanks again to those of you who have submitted articles and photographs. Keep up the great work!

## Submission Criteria

Please include the author's name, title and location, captions and high resolution photographs attached as separate jpeg files. The article submission deadline for "Smoke Signals" is as follows:

March 1  
June 1  
September 1  
December 1

Please start submitting articles for the next issue of Smoke Signals as soon as you can! Thank you!

*"If a man does his best, what else is there?"* ~ General George S. Patton (1885-1945)

## Distribution

Please route this publication to your staff as well as to your EFFers. If you need additional copies for your staff, or need copies sent to an another address please contact us. Please make sure your seasonal fire employees have an opportunity to read Smoke Signals!

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Attn: Smoke Signals

## Thank you!

If you don't see your article in this issue of Smoke Signals, you should see it in the next. Thanks again for the high quality articles and excellent response!

### Article Submission Checklist

- Author's name
- Author's title
- Author's agency/location
  
- High resolution jpg photos
- Name of photographer
- Photo captions
- Names of people in photo and where they work
  
- Contact name, number, and email address