



INTERTRIBAL TIMBER COUNCIL TIMBER NOTES

Winter ~ 2021



Jim Durglo

WILDLAND FIRE TECHNICAL SPECIALIST

The significance of Indigenous burning is getting acknowledged. Included in this article are a couple of recent publications highlighting the relationship of indigenous people and fire and a reference to the interactive DVD and other materials titled *Fire on the Land* from the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes 2006.

Mary Huffman, Executive Director of the Indigenous Burning Network and Fire Science, The Nature Conservancy- shared an article in the winter issue of TNC's Magazine about the Indigenous Peoples Burning Network. She says that one of the ultimate goals of the Indigenous Peoples Burning Network is to support tribes in their self-determination and self-sufficiency when it comes to fire,

Indigenous people have been practicing controlled, deliberate burns in North America, and around the world, for millennia. For the Yurok, Karuk and Hoopa Tribes of Northern California, human-managed fires across their traditional lands are vital. They promote the growth of traditional food

sources, like acorns, and basket-weaving materials, like hazel. The fires even support the life cycles of salmon.

The Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes of the Flathead Indian Reservation, Montana have been engaged in the development of the Montana Forest Action Plan (2019-2020) and have included an essay authored by Thompson Smith, Coordinator, Tribal History, and Ethnogeography Projects, Séliš-Qlispe Culture Committee titled "Indigenous People and Forests" that provides an excellent overview of a historic relationship with fire and provides evidence that fire suppression efforts did not begin after the Big Burn of 1910 or the 10AM policy approved in 1935, but with the criminalization of burning by native peoples. This is available on the Montana DNRC website at: <https://www.montanaforestactionplan.org>.

The essay goes on to note: While tribal peoples generally lived lightly upon the land, usually working within the terms and limits of natural systems rather than forcefully transforming them, theirs was not a passive relationship with the environment. Tribes actively employed many tools to nurture and augment the foods and materials that were of importance to human life. The single most powerful of those tools—the tool that most expansively shaped our forests— was fire. All of Montana, both east and west of the Continental Divide, was shaped by fire, whether of natural origin or human caused. But in many places, the latter was far more frequent. For thousands of years, much of the region, including both prairies and woodlands, was primarily shaped by the deliberate, purposeful, and careful application of fire by Indian people.

Tribal nations treated the forests with fire for a variety of reasons and in many specific ways, each of them learned, honed, and perfected over their millennia of living in this place. Salish Kalispel elders have described how the application of fire was a difficult, complicated, and dangerous task, one only learned through long experience, and entrusted to a person referred to as the *sx"paám*, the one who makes fire, a person of high knowledge and training. The *sx"paám* and his assistants used fire in certain places, times of the year, and conditions. They did so for a variety of purposes. One objective was to create and maintain low-land forests in an open, park-like state dominated by old-growth ponderosa pine and larch.

Tribal people also used fire to revitalize important medicinal and food plants, such as camas and huckleberries.

They applied fire to clear trails that had been blocked by downed trees. They employed fire as part of their hunting practices. They often fired the prairies and grasslands to ensure rich and productive grazing for bison and

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President's Message

by Cody Desautel



Cody Desautel

Happy New Year to all of our tribal communities! We have turned the page on 2020 and hope that the new year brings many opportunities for healing and renewal.

A new Administration under the leadership of President Biden offers chances to advocate the importance of Indian forestry – not only as a land management paradigm, but also as a tool of spiritual, cultural, and economic importance to Indian people. U.S. Representative Deb Haaland (D-New Mexico) has been nominated to serve as the first Indian Secretary of the Interior. ITC looks forward to working with her on both forest management and wildfire issues.

There will be many other new appointees within the Departments of Interior and Agriculture that will require ITC's outreach to ensure tribal priorities are both understood and addressed.

ITC will also be working with the new Biden Administration and Congress on the upcoming 2023 IFMAT report. We are on track for the preparation of this congressionally mandated report which occurs every ten years. We are having regular video conferences with our IFMAT co-chairs to finalize the planned activities and site visits in the coming year. Tribes selected for site visits should be receiving a letter expressing interest soon. There are still unanswered questions about how these visits will be conducted considering the current COVID-19 situation, but rest assured the safety and health of our member tribes is our top priority.

The 2020 fire season will surely drive Congress to take additional actions to better respond to the specter of wildfire. ITC has already been working with congressional leaders on prescribed fire legislation and other con-

cepts that can reduce severity and risks to communities when fire does occur.

We continue to work with the Forest Service on authorities that we secured in the past. These include Good Neighbor Authority for tribes and 638 contracting authority for Tribal Forest Protection Act projects, demonstration projects carried out under the Indian Energy Act. To date, one TFPA 638 contract has been signed, and at least two more have been approved. ITC also continues to work on a legislative fix to address the treatment of revenue issue within the Good Neighbor Authority.

Later in the year we will have much more to share at our virtual ITC symposium. More information about this event will be provided to you soon. To our member tribes and organizations, thank you for your continued support of the ITC and its mission.



Education Committee

by Nicole Stiffarm



Nicole Stiffarm

Greetings from the ITC Education Committee. I hope that you enjoyed your holiday break. The Education Committee met virtually in December to review applications for the Native American Natural Resource Research Scholarship. Altogether we had three complete applications from some amazing tribal graduate students.

2020 NATIVE AMERICAN NATURAL RESOURCE SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS

- Zachary Erickson, Humboldt State University, *"Developing a co-management relationship with the Wiyot Tribe within Humboldt State University's newly acquired Jacoby Creek Forest tract in Humboldt County, California"*
- Anthony Ciocco, Oregon State University, *"State and transition simulation modeling on the Navajo Nation incorporating an agentbased model of wild horses and dynamic Bayesian networks to weigh alternative management options for degraded rangelands under climate change scenarios"*

Congratulations to these two outstanding scholars! ITC is proud to support tribal students in their academic careers as the next generation of manag-

ers and natural resource professionals.

2021 TRUMAN D. PICARD SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATIONS

As we move into 2021, we would like to remind you of the Truman D. Picard Scholarship is still accepting applications through Friday, March 12, 2021, 5:00 p.m. PST. Please see the ITC website for scholarship details and application FAQ's.

Moving forward toward the 2021 ITC Virtual Symposium, I hope you all stay tuned for details on the upcoming online raffle slated to kick off in the spring and run through the symposium. 100% of the proceeds from the raffle will go toward funding the scholarships for next year. Until then, I hope you all continue to stay safe and healthy!



Wildland Fire Technical Specialist

by Jim Durglo

(Continued from cover)



Elizabeth Azzuz of the Cultural Fire Management Council opens a fire-training exchange, or TREX, on Yurok lands in 2019. She holds angelica root and wormwood, which are used to light a first, ceremonial fire.

© Kiliiii Yuyan

other ungulates, and in more recent centuries, for horses. As the elders remind us, the ancestors used fire not only to benefit human beings, but also to help the plants and animals for their own sake.

The traditional use of fire, and indigenous relationships with forests in a larger sense, were tied to a defining aspect of tribal life here. Because there was nothing approximating money or markets in tribal economies, Indian people and tribal economies directly engaged with and used natural resources to meet the spiritual and material needs of the people.

As non-Indian governing capacity expanded, federal, state, and local officials increasingly repressed tribal burning of prairies and woods, often at the same time they were repressing off-reservation hunting. Tribal hunters and fire-keepers had always been honored and respected for their ability to harvest game and to burn the woods and prairies in ways that helped ensure the future productivity of the land. Suddenly, newly established non-Indian authorities were arresting them for those same actions, now characterized as “depredations.” At times, military or police units used lethal force to suppress the tribal use of fire. On December 21, 1875, for example, the Missoula Pioneer reported that 183 lodges of Pend d’Oreille (upper Kalispel) and allied tribes were hunting near the Canadian border when officers of



In 2006, Salish elder Louie Adams (1933-2016) walks through the Primm Meadows forest, one of the few remnant examples of the lowland old-growth ponderosa parks shaped over centuries by tribal application of fire. SQCC image



Louie McDonald and Don Sam re-enacting the traditional use of fire. Courtesy of CSKT, 2003.

the International line shot and killed two members of the party. They were killed neither for hunting nor for brandishing weapons. They were killed for setting fire to the prairie grass.

Another great source of information that offers a combined cultural and scientific understanding of fire and its history in Montana forests, is the interactive DVD set and supporting information developed and produced by the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes, *Fire on the Land: Native Peoples and Fire in the Northern Rockies* (Lincoln: The Uni-

versity of Nebraska Press, 2006).

This project was funded by the BIA-National Fire Center that focus on the traditional use of fire by Indian people and the effects that Indian burning had on plant and animal communities. For information about this material, contact the CSKT Forestry Department at 406-676-3755.



BIA Central Office Forestry

by Peter Wakeland



Peter Wakeland

PLANNING AND PRIORITIES

Central Office Staff: Since the last report, BIA Central Office has been busy staffing up. We have hired three new GS-0460-14 Foresters – Stacie Holmes, Caleb Cain, and Orvie Danzuka; two GS-11 Inventory Foresters – Matthew Ruggirello and Stephen Singleton, and the Timber Team – Philip (Ryan) Frandino, Jason Roberts, Connor Ekhout, Garrett McFall, Hillary Chittom, and Wesley Staats. We thank the BIA internal human capital staff for all their hard work, and we're looking forward to providing more effective and efficient services to the Tribes.

Regional Forester's Meeting: Regional Foresters' meeting is being held virtually this year due to Covid restrictions. The meeting will occur over a three-week period starting January 5th and concluding on January 21st. We have allotted time for ITC's update and look forward to hearing your report along with our regional staff reports. For more information on the meeting, please contact Stacie Holmes.

Indian Trust Assets Reform Act (ITARA): Two Tribes are participating in the demonstration project and both now have approved Indian Trust Asset Management Plans (ITAMPs), and Tribal Forestry Regulations. Under the approved ITAMPs and Tribal Forestry Regulations, the Tribes will be able to conduct forestland management activities without the requirement of Secretarial approval. The opportunity to participate in the demonstration project is still available to Tribes. For more information, contact Pete Wakeland, Chief Forester.

Funding and Positions Analysis: The FY2019 Funding and Position Analysis data collection phase is complete. The data is being reviewed for quality control and will be delivered to the IFMAT for use in the development of the next IFMAT Report. Information and instructions on how to complete the request for FY2020 data will be sent to the Regions soon. Tribal data is very important in accurately describing the status of Indian forestry, and we strongly encourage Tribes to fully participate by submitting their data to the Regions. The IFMAT Report is mandated by NIFRMA, and the next report is projected to be complete in 2023. Contact Stacie Holmes for more information.

Timber Strike Team: The six-person Timber Team is now established, and all six team members are stationed in Billings, Montana. The team is comprised of all foresters (0460 series) that have educational backgrounds from a bachelors, to a masters and Phd. They also bring with them experience from the USFS, BLM, state and private industry. Project requests have been received from Montana, Utah, Washington, South Dakota, Oklahoma, and Nebraska. Their calendar is starting to fill up quickly for the spring and early summer field season. Covid will likely affect their travel this year and their safety along with the safety of the local programs they will be working with is the number one priority.

Questions about the Timber Team can be directed to Philip Frandino (Philip.Frandino@bia.gov), Team Supervisor or Caleb Cain, Forester.

BRANCH OF FOREST RESOURCES PLANNING (BOFRP)

CFI Application: The analysis programs are being verified and the FORTRAN programmer is fixing the codes to ensure accuracy in the outputs. Currently, BOFRP is verifying the Northwest and Western Analysis programs. It has been our goal to release a new field data collector program for use on a Windows-based tablet. The programmer will have the prototype ready for BOFRP staff to view in January 2021. The tablet

data collector will have the desktop version of BOFRP Apps and will include more thorough error checking, reporting errors at time of data entry.

Inventory Handbook Team: The Inventory Handbook Team is currently developing the 53 Indian Affairs Manual (IAM) Chapter 8 Handbook. Foresters from several Regions are contributing to this effort. This will be the companion handbook to the updated 53 IAM Chapter 8 Inventory and Monitoring that was issued March 10, 2020. https://www.bia.gov/sites/bia.gov/files/assets/public/raca/manual/pdf/53%20IAM%208_Inventory%20and%20Monitoring_FINAL_March%202020_signed_corrected%20footer_508.pdf

National Forest Library: The scanning of the National Indian Forest Management Library is completed. The BOFRP team members and Pathways interns are helping with the quality control to ensure the National Indian Forestry Management Library database contain accurate data. The archived BOFRP project files will be scanned in FY2021.

BOFRP Objectives: Our goal is to better serve the Tribes. We are committed to improving the data collection process and simplifying post-inventory by merging analysis into a single unit to streamline CFI processing at all stages.

Staff Updates: It saddens me to announce the retirement of Karen DeBord. After 23 years with the BIA and four years with Makah and Siletz, Karen has 27 years of dedication to serving Indian Country, and her last workday will be 31 December 2020. Karen has been an integral part of BoFRP, and her contributions will always be valued and remembered. She has helped complete forest inventories, forest inventory analysis reports, forest management plans, forest health protection projects, and she was essential in the development and improvement of BIA inventory databases and applications. Karen has maintained a constant focus on silviculture and its importance in setting high standards

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BIA Central Office Forestry

by Peter Wakeland

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for forest management. A Silviculturist pays attention to the forest's past, present and future, and has one of the most important roles on a forestry staff. Thank you for your dedication and a successful career! Enjoy your retirement!

BRANCH OF WILDLAND FIRE MANAGEMENT (BWFM)

Operations: Continues to monitor fire activity nationally and working closely as a member of the National Multi Agency Coordinating Group (NMAC) to provide interagency coordination and response to new and existing fires. Operations is currently working on updating FireCode guidance for the Interagency FireCode Guidance document.

The National Multi Agency Coordinating Group (NMAC) meetings are being held once a month (third Thursdays of the month) due to our current state at Preparedness Level 1. The NMAC will be finalizing their annual After Action Review (AAR) on December 17, 2020. The AAR will identify any necessary improvements for overall national coordination and mobilization.

Fuels Management Program: Active Management activities supported restoration and maintenance of healthy forests, woodlands and rangelands; Forestry, Fuels, and Post Wildfire Recovery investments can return a range of 2 to 30 times the cost of suppression in the form of Avoided Costs (a loss not yet incurred i.e. soil erosion, water quality). Prevention (reduction of human fires) investments can return up to 35 times the dollar investment through Avoided Cost of suppression and resource loss.

In FY20 by embracing Active Management Indian Country achievements include:

- Fuels treated an historic high of 364,816 acres, a 180% over historic average.
- Fuels exceeded planned targeted acres (184,905) by 197%.
- Fuels conducted 159,819 acres of non-native and invasive species treatments.
- Strategically placed fuels treatments occurred at a 98% rate per the Fuel Treatment Effectiveness Monitoring (FTEM).

- Strategically placed fuels treatments helped control and or manage fire at an occurrence rate of 98% (both are highest of federal agencies recorded in FTEM between 2018-2020).
- Reserved Treaty Rights Lands met 128 Tribal and 40 collaborator priorities.
- Burned Area Rehabilitation (BAR) utilized \$4,385,000 for 25 projects on 16 reservations treating 29,739 acres for reforestation, seeding, and invasive plant and noxious weed control and water quality protection and mitigation.
- Emergency Stabilization utilized \$1,588,986 for 35 projects on 23 reservations to stabilize imminent post-wildfire threats to human life and property, and to critical natural and cultural resources.
- Prevention of human ignitions: Investment of \$4.5 million in wildfire prevention resulted in an estimated range of resource loss and suppression costs avoided of \$9 - \$158 million.



Technical Specialist

by Don Motanic



Don Motanic

ENERGY PARTNERSHIPS WOOD PELLETS AND INNOVATIONS

Tribal forestry programs have the opportunity to take advantage of connect-

ing programs and funding opportunities with the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) Division of Energy and Mineral Development (DEMD) and the U.S Forest Service Wood Innovations Program.

The BIA DEMD Program has produced a brochure, Small Scale Wood Pellet Manufacturing – A Local Economic Opportunity for Tribes. The brochure provides a good two-page graphic outline which describes a wood pellet business model which includes three primary factors; a stable supply of low-cost raw material, existing wood pellet markets that can be penetrated, and/or the potential to create new markets locally.

The brochure then examines the question, Does Your Tribe Have Potential? Several foundational factors will need

to exist to rationally move forward with a detailed assessment to determine the viability of a sustainable small-scale pellet manufacturing and distribution business that include:

- Existing markets for pellet sales
- Strong potential (demand) for creating a market, which would likely require older stoves that can be replaced, new homes that can be installed with residential pellet appliances, or buildings that can use large pellet boilers (government buildings, businesses, or schools)
- Investment capital such as loans and/or local/ state/federal grants
- Long term availability of raw material feedstock

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Technical Specialist

by Don Motanic

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Finally, the brochure describes the Tribal Business advantage. The Tribes would be able to use specific strategies to increase competitiveness in the local pellet market:

- Tribes can use their tax-exempt status to produce pellets at a lower cost than other local pellet mills
- Extra profit margin would allow the Tribe to subsidize stove swap outs, invest in their forestry teams, and provide members cheaper heating fuel than propane or other cost variable fuels
- Tribes have distinct relationships with local, state, and federal government entities that can support strategies aligned with the deployment of pellet heating systems such as stove swap out programs and incentives for Tribal members
- The tribal wood pellet manufacturing business may allow for additional opportunities in diverse product streams that include premium heating pellets, barbecue pellets, and animal bedding with existing markets on and off the reservation.

Is this a viable business option for your Tribe? Work with DEMD and move forward with a focused, investment-grade feasibility study. For more information, email their team about funding opportunities and how to begin a preliminary feedstock and feasibility assessment. Division of Energy and Mineral Development Renewable and Distributed Generation Jennifer Reimann, Civil Engineer - Renewable Energy jennifer.reimann@bia.gov

U.S. Forest Service Wood Innovations. In addition to the BIA DEMD Program, the Tribes can take advantage of the Forest Service Wood Innovations Program. The Forest Service and its partners are creating new opportunities for innovative wood products which contribute to diversified rural economies and support sustainable forest management. Innovative wood building materials and wood energy promote healthier forested landscapes

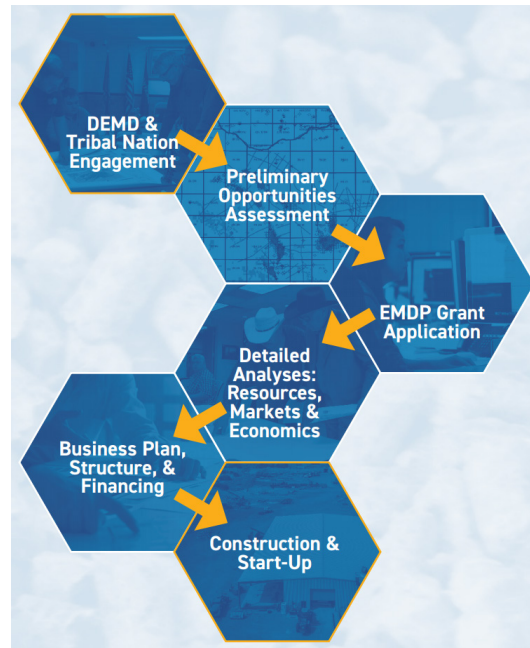


Photo from the BIA DEMD Brochure

for future generations in a socially, economically, and environmentally sound manner. The goal of the Wood Innovations program is to:

- Reduce hazardous fuels and improve forest health on National Forest System and other forest lands;
- Reduce costs of forest management on all land types; and
- Promote economic and environmental health of communities.

Currently the Program has two opportunities with RFP until January and February 2021.

Community Wood Energy and Wood Innovation Grant Program (RFP Deadline February 3, 2021)

The 2018 Farm Bill established and authorized funding for the Community Wood Energy and Wood Innovation Program to issue grants that fund the “capital cost for installing a community wood energy system or building an innovative wood product facility.” Criteria and preferences for projects are outlined in Section 8644 of the 2018 Farm Bill. The USDA Forest Service plans to post the next Request for Proposals on this website and www.grants.gov (link is external) in the fall

of 2020. For questions about this program, please contact: Julie Tucker at julie.tucker@usda.gov

Wood Innovations Funding Opportunity (RFP Deadline January 20, 2021)

The Wood Innovations Funding Opportunity supports traditional wood utilization projects, expands wood energy markets, and promotes using wood as a construction material in commercial buildings. The Forest Service supports proposals that significantly stimulate or expand wood energy and wood products markets that support the long-term management of National Forest System and other forest lands. The USDA Forest Service plans to post the next Request for Proposals on this website and www.grants.gov in the fall of 2020. For questions about this program, please contact: Kevin Naranjo at kevin.naranjo@usda.gov

More information about the Wood Innovations Program can be found at this website:

www.fs.usda.gov/naspf/programs/wood-education-and-resource-center/wood-innovations-home





Matt Hill

POST-ELECTION WRAP-UP

On December 14, Joe Biden was once again declared the winner of the presidential election after members of the Electoral College gathered in all 50 states and the District of Columbia to cast their ballots.

It is a constitutionally mandated ritual that is typically no more than a curious afterthought following a presidential election, but the ceremonial vote took on newfound significance this year as President Donald Trump challenged the November election results.

Joe Biden will become the 46th President of the United States on January 20, 2021. Like President Trump's victory over Hillary Clinton in 2016, a relatively small number of votes in several swing states, including Arizona, Georgia, and Wisconsin, provided the difference for the Biden-Harris ticket.

While Democrats will be ecstatic to recapture the White House, the results in Senate, House, and state legislative races were a major disappointment for the party. Pending the results of two Senate runoff elections in Georgia it appears that Republicans will hold the U.S. Senate with the net loss of just one seat – a significant accomplishment considering a loss of 5+ seats looked possible.

Senator Steve Daines (R-MT) exceeded expectations in his margin of victory over incumbent Democratic Governor Steve Bullock. Daines provides criti-

cal leadership on forestry issues in the Congress. However, Democrats defeated incumbent Senators Cory Gardner (R-CO) and Marth McSally (R-AZ), who couldn't overcome President Trump's unpopularity in growing metro areas like Denver and Phoenix.

House Republicans have picked up 11 seats in the U.S. House, where Democrats expected to increase their majority in the election. With a narrow 223-212 House majority, Democrats may find it difficult to pass progressive policies like the Green New Deal and Medicare for All. There is already a growing rift between the progressive wing of the caucus and more moderate Democrats with each blaming each other for the election losses. One of the most notable losses for House Democrats was Minnesota Congressman Collin Peterson, who is the current chair of the House Agriculture Committee and has represented a rural, farm-heavy district since 1991.

Peterson's loss, retirements like that of Congressman Greg Walden (R-OR), and Senate term limit rules on committee chairmanships, will cause a reshuffling of committee chairmanships and ranking member positions. Rep. Bruce Westerman (R-AR) will become the GOP Ranking Member of the House Natural Resources Committee. Westerman is a professional forester and very familiar with tribal forestry matters. Cathy McMorris-Rodgers (R-WA) will become the Ranking Member of the powerful Energy & Commerce Committee, which has jurisdiction for healthcare (including IHS).

On the Senate side, Lisa Murkowski (R-AK) will assume the gavel of the Indian Affairs Committee, while John Barrasso (R-WY) will lead the Energy & Natural Resources Committee.

In addition to the stinging losses in the House and the failure to capture the Senate, Democrats also missed an opportunity to capture more state legislatures and governorships. Following a strong wave election in 2010, Republicans used their majorities in key states

to create a structural advantage for their party in the decadal redistricting process for congressional and legislative districts in certain states. Democrats had hoped to make more ground ahead of this round of redistricting.

PREVIEW OF THE BIDEN ADMINISTRATION

Work is well underway to place thousands of political appointees into positions for the upcoming Biden Administration. For the Department of Agriculture, which includes the Forest Service, the transition team is being led by Robert Bonnie, who served as Undersecretary for Natural Resources and the Environment during the Obama Administration. In his role overseeing the Forest Service, Bonnie was an advocate for increasing the pace and scale of forest management and restoration. The transition team for the Department of the Interior is also led by veterans of the Obama Administration who have a background in tribal affairs, green energy, and climate change – perhaps signaling likely focus areas under the Biden Administration.

At the time of publication, Biden has made the following nominations for Cabinet-level positions:

- Interior: Rep. Deb Haaland (D-NM) – Haaland will be the first Indian to serve as Secretary of the Interior. She has pledged to focus on issues of environmental justice and climate change.
- USDA: Tom Vilsack (former Iowa Governor and USDA Secretary under President Obama)
- Energy: Jennifer Granholm (former Michigan Governor)
- Transportation: Pete Buttigieg (presidential candidate)
- HHS: Xavier Becerra (former congressman and CA Atty. General)
- HUD: Marcia Fudge (congresswoman)
- VA: Denis McDonough (Obama Chief of Staff)
- State: Antony Blinken (longtime Biden aide)

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- Defense: Lloyd Austin (4-star general)
- Homeland Security: Alejandro Mayorkas (DHS Dep. Sec. under Obama)

SUPPLEMENTAL COVID LEGISLATION

Just before Christmas, Congress stumbled to an agreement on a final piece of COVID relief legislation as well as funding for the government in Fiscal Year 2021. After passing two Continuing Resolutions, the House and Senate agreed to a massive \$900 billion coronavirus rescue package and a \$1.4 trillion omnibus appropriations bill.

One of the sticking points in negotiations was over providing additional economic relief to states (and consequently tribes). While the bill provides additional unemployment and PPP relief to businesses, it will not provide new financial relief for states and tribes. However, the bill does allow tribes to use already-appropriated CARES Act funds (Coronavirus Relief Fund) through calendar year 2021. These funds otherwise would have expired at the end of 2020.

Elements of the final package include:

COVID Relief:

- Extends the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) and adds deductibility for PPP expenses
- Stimulus checks -- \$600 for both adults and dependents
- Temporarily extends a number of unemployment programs created by CARES Act that expire Dec. 31, 2020
- Provide unemployed individuals an additional \$300 per week for 10 weeks from December 26, 2020-March 14, 2021
- \$25 billion in temporary and targeted rental assistance for individuals who lost their source of income during the pandemic
- Increases SNAP benefits by 15% for six months

- \$13 billion to support our farmers and agriculture sector (which includes loggers and log haulers)

Vaccine Distribution:

- \$20 billion for purchase of vaccines that will make the vaccine available at no charge for anyone who needs it
- \$8 billion for vaccine distribution
- \$20 billion to assist states with testing
- \$20 billion distribution from existing provider relief fund

WYDEN PRESCRIBED FIRE BILL

Sen. Ron Wyden (D-OR) has introduced prescribed fire legislation called the National Prescribed Fire Act (S.4625). ITC worked extensively with his office on drafting the legislation, which authorizes additional funding and statutory direction toward prescribed fire.

Wyden's bill:

- Establishes \$300 million accounts for both the Forest Service and the Department of the Interior (DOI) to plan, prepare, and conduct controlled burns on federal, tribal (trust), state, and private lands.
- Requires the Forest Service and DOI to increase the number of acres treated with controlled burns.
- Establishes a \$10 million collaborative program, based on the successful Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Program, to implement controlled burns on county, state and private land at high risk of burning in a wildfire.
- Establishes an incentive program to provide funding to state, county, and federal agencies for any large-scale controlled burn.
- Establishes a workforce development program at the Forest Service and DOI to develop, train, and hire prescribed fire practitioners, and establishes employment programs for Tribes, veterans, women, and those formerly incarcerated.
- Requires state air quality agencies to use current laws and reg-

ulations to allow larger controlled burns, and give states more flexibility in winter months to conduct controlled burns that reduce catastrophic smoke events in the summer.

The bill specifically requires consultation with tribes on federal burn plans and prioritization of funding.

ITC is specifically listed as an authorized entity to receive federal funding to provide training and workforce development opportunities in wildland fire.

The Senate Energy & Natural Resources Committee recently held a legislative hearing on Wyden's bill. Both the Forest Service and DOI generally spoke supportively of the bill. The DOI witness stated in testimony:

"This past year, the DOI completed over 1.5 million acres of fuels management treatments on DOI and Tribal lands. This is a 25 percent increase over last year's accomplishments and builds on four consecutive years of increasing treatments totaling more than 5 million acres. It is also the largest number of acres treated over the past decade. Fuels management treatments are proven to have a critical role in influencing wildfire behavior, enhancing the safety and effectiveness of wildfire response, reducing wildfire risk, and safeguarding our communities."

NEW FOREST SERVICE NEPA RULE

On November 19, the Forest Service's final National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) rule was published in the Federal Register, capping a nearly three-year process by agency staff to update and streamline environmental analysis and decision-making procedures. Adoption of the rule was delayed for months as the Forest Service worked to ensure the proposal was consistent with the overarching NEPA reform regulations issued by the White House Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) this summer.

The primary elements of the rule are:

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Legislative Update

Matt Hill

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1) a new restoration Categorical Exclusion (CE) for up to 2,800 acres of treatment; 2) adoption of a “determination of NEPA adequacy” (DNA) procedure; and 3) a series of additional CEs for routine agency actions, including the renewal of special use permits and issuance of certain recreation permits.

Because of the intervening CEQ rules, the Forest Service was forced to reduce the scope of the rule compared to what was originally proposed. The agency has indicated that it plans to review other aspects of its original proposal and potentially issue further rules by September 2021, although it is unclear whether that would proceed under a Biden Administration.

Some environmental groups have responded with harsh criticism of the rule changes and may file litigation challenging the rule.



Operations Committee

by Darin Jarnaghan, Sr.



Darin Jarnaghan, Sr.

During the December Operations Committee meeting our discussions focused on the following:

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

The Bureau of Indian Affairs, led by Johnna Blackhair, BIA Deputy Director of Office of Trust Services and Gayla Schock, BIA Supervisory HR Specialist provided a PowerPoint detailing the BIA’s plans for workforce development for wildland fire. They provided an overview of personnel changes and additions to the Central Office staff that would enable the BIA to better meet the needs of BIA agencies and tribal fire programs. A follow-up meeting has been scheduled for January 11 from 9 to 11am Pacific time to provide additional time for discussion with BIA Human Resources staff.

A workforce development report, in association with Ecotrust, by Stephanie Coward and Don Motanic was presented to the ITC Operations Com-

mittee. Approximately 40 tribes responded to requests from Stephanie to provide input on the workforce development report. Tribal programs still need workforce, however this report is attempting to narrow the gap by allowing tribes to identify ways in which employment could be obtained in the future. Further information can be found on the ITC webpage.

IFMAT IV

The Indian Forest Management Assessment Report is congressionally mandated to be performed every 10 years. The report is designed to be an independent assessment of natural resource management by professionals and experts in the natural resource field. The fourth Indian Forest Management Assessment Team (IFMAT) will be led by Co-Chairs, John Gordon and John Sessions, which will be their fourth assessment overall. Vincent Corrao will be managing many of the operational duties including site visits.

The IFMAT IV team will be visiting tribes beginning in 2021 and continuing thru early 2022. The IFMAT IV Team, due to COVID-19, will attempt to develop a virtual visit followed up by a site visit. Other logistics of the IFMAT IV Report site visits will be finalized with Tribes being contacted to confirm dates. The ITC Board of Directors approved contracts for the proposed technical specialists and students at the December Board meeting.

The IFMAT IV Team will provide updates to a ITC Oversight Committee on a periodic basis.

OFFICE OF TRIBAL RELATIONS

The United States Forest Service, Office of Tribal Relations, has introduced Mr. Reed Robinson as the new Director. Reed, was introduced to the ITC Board of Directors at the December 2020 board meeting. The new Director provided insights he will use to guide the OTR; including his attempt to include Indian Country during priority setting for OTR, not diminishing Tribal Sovereignty, and identify his office as an ally for Tribes. We look forward to working with Reed in the future.

ITARA

Indian Trust Asset Management Reform Act (ITARA): The Office of Assistant Secretary on Indian Affairs has received and approved the Coquille Indian Tribe and Cow Creek Band of Umpqua Indians, Indian Trust Asset Management Plan. The ITAMP will allow for increased sovereignty of natural resource management and associated decision making on natural resource assessments. Other tribes have shown interest in the opportunity and are in various stages of utilizing the law approved in 2016.

I hope everyone had a great holiday season and continues to stay healthy in the new year.



Symposium Committee

by Howard Teasley, Jr.



Howard Teasley, Jr.

2021 ITC VIRTUAL SYMPOSIUM

Meele Kismes 'Eey sin'. Hautnin awas. Niimiipuu timpt. Merry Christmas, Happy New Year and Blessing to you in our Nez Perce Language.

CRAZY! Things are very different this year, everyone is learning how to get along virtually by purchasing on the internet with Amazon, while buying from the large businesses and also supporting the small. And using all virtual platforms to communicate with friends and family from a far or in the same neighborhood. So, it took my savvy self to ask my daughter how many virtual meeting apps and software have been used by us to communicate - FaceTime, Microsoft Teams Meeting, Zoom, House Party, Facebook Video Chats, Instagram Video Chats, and Google Meet. Just to name a few that I have used or not.

Intertribal Timber Council is "Movin on Up" referencing the 1975 sitcom, "The Jefferson's." I remember George very vividly as child...but now anyone can binge watch this show in a day. We would like to get as many people interest in our new creation - a Virtual Symposium for this spring. The Symposium Committee has been working very diligently to produce a memorable and interesting product for you.

I would like to invite our Intertribal Timber Council family to the Forty

Fourth Annual Nation Indian Timber Symposium, being held virtually on May 17 – 20, 2021. The theme of this year's symposium is **"Thriving through Adversity"**. Each day will start promptly at 9am and conclude by 1pm (Pacific Time). Check the ITC Website periodically for 2021 Symposium information updates.

Monday, May 17: The symposium officially starts with the **Opening Ceremony** a performance from the Songbirds Canoe Family, Invocation by Victoria Wesley, Welcome by ITC President and ITC Delegates, and **Keynote Address** by Robin Kimmer-

cation of Unmanned Aerial Systems to examine the use and applications relevant to natural resources and wildland fire management. The **Student Scholarship Break** will award the 2020 Native American Natural Resources Research Scholarship Recipients and the 2021 Truman D. Picard Scholarship Recipients.

Wednesday, May 19: The day will start with the **Research Needs Assessment Update**, where our ITC Research Subcommittee will present a summary of tribal research needs identified in the second assessment to understand the research needs, prio-



Who's that masked man?
Get ready for
ITC's 2021 Virtual
Symposium!

er, Distinguished Teaching Professor, SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry, Syracuse, NY. Next a **Native Story Tellers Break** by Wisdom of the Elders. We will have **Updates** from the Office of Wildland Fire, Bureau of Indian Affairs, and the Legislative. Next will be a **Virtual Mixer Break** and we will end **Updates** with USFS Office of Tribal Relations and the Presidents Report.

Tuesday, May 18: We will start with the **IFMAT IV Update** with introductions of the core team, technical specialist and student participants; give project progress and development of the work plan. Following with an **Entertainment Break** with the reputable musically inclined Will Putnam. Next will be the **Natural Resource Appli-**

ries, and interests of Native American tribes' forest resource managers and decision-makers. **Native Story Tellers Break** by Wisdom of the Elders. Followed by the **Student Research Forestry & Fire** presentation. There will be a **2022 Symposium Host Break** a preview of Tanana Chiefs Conference and the Athabaskan Tribes of interior Alaska. Finally, **Tribal Carbon Projects** will be a discussion regarding current forest carbon projects, lessons learned, and how to develop and maintain projects. We will conclude the day with the **Wildland Fire Update**.

Thursday, May 20: The day's activities will start with a **Ecotrust Workforce Development Project**. Then an

(Continued on page 11)

Symposium Committee

by Howard Teasley, Jr.

(Continued from page 10)

Entertainment Break by the Songbirds Canoe Family. Following is the **Economic Market Outlook. Awards Break** with the announcement of the 2021 Earle R. Wilcox Recipients. The next session is **Cross-Boundary Collaboration Authorities & Funding Opportunities**. Ending with **Closing Remarks** from our ITC President and the Lead Mediator Stephanie Lucero.

Help: Intertribal Timber council is nonprofit organization and is always looking for donations and/or sponsorships during the Annual Timber Symposium. The break sponsorships are full, but ITC will accept sponsorships

that can be of any amount. If a Tribe or business is interested in making a donation, please contact ITC directly.

Here are the future Symposium dates for planning purposes:

2022 – 45th Annual National Indian Timber Symposium hosted by Tanana Chiefs Conference, Fairbanks, AK

2023 – 46th Annual National Indian Timber Symposium hosted by the Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe, Walker, MN

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

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

Take Care and God Bless you. Qe'ci-yew' Godnim Hautnin awas

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/mailling_list.html.



Awards Committee

by Will Putman



Will Putman

NOMINATIONS FOR THE 2021 EARLE R. WILCOX AWARDS

The times are challenging, and 2020 has been a year like no other, but we hope everybody has had a rewarding and safe holiday season despite the need to socially distance from your friends and loved ones. This time of year also marks the time when ITC is looking to receive and review nominations for the Earle R. Wilcox Awards. This year, the deadline for submission of award nominations to ITC is January 29, 2021 (5:00 p.m. Pacific Standard Time). Information on how to

submit a nomination can be found on the ITC website https://www.itcnet.org/about_us/awards.html or by calling the ITC office at 503-282-4296.

The challenging times also extend to our efforts to continue the good work in forestry and natural resource management for our tribes. I am sure there are outstanding examples across Indian Country where forestry and natural resource staff have risen to the occasion to complete and extend their work in the face of the pandemic through innovation and creativity. We would all like to hear about and recognize the finest examples of that work.

Award recipients will be announced and recognized at the 44th National Indian Timber Symposium, being held virtually May 17-20, 2021. Nominations will be considered for the Earle R. Wilcox Individual Achievement and National Forester of the Year awards. The Wilcox awards are how ITC recognizes individuals who have made valuable contributions to Tribal forestry and natural resource management. We all benefit from work by our colleagues that goes above and beyond normal expectations, and it is important that we step up and recognize good work when it occurs. Although the word "Tim-

ber" is part of ITC's name and identity, please keep in mind that people whose contributions come from the broader array of natural resource disciplines are also eligible for the awards.





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First Class
