



INTERTRIBAL TIMBER COUNCIL TIMBER NOTES

Spring ~ 2022



Howard Teasley, Jr.

REGISTER NOW FOR THE 2022 ITC SYMPOSIUM!

The Intertribal Timber Council family would like to invite you to the 49th state found in the northwest extremity of North America. We are excited to have the symposium on site and looking forward to celebrating our time in Fairbanks. This is our second attempt and being out of our norm to make sure to plan ahead by making your necessary reservations for your stay, vehicles, and activities. **The 45th Annual National Indian Timber Symposium** will be held **May 16-20, 2022**, at the Wedgewood Resort in Fairbanks, Alaska, hosted by Tanana Chiefs Conference. The theme of this year's symposium is **"Connecting Tribes and Land Management."**

ITC requires COVID-19 vaccination of all attendees. Everyone must provide proof of vaccination in advance of the meeting. ITC

will follow federal, state, and local health requirements. Face masks must be worn. We want to create a safe environment for our attendees, families, and brothers & sisters around Indian Country.

Online registration closes May 11, 2022. Make sure you register early. There is a max attendee limit of 200 event-wide due to space limitations at the hotel. Onsite registration will not be available.

No onsite sales of guest tickets for the Tuesday Luncheon and Thursday Awards Banquet. Please purchase online until May 11, 2022. Guests must have COVID-19 vaccination.

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

Sunday-Monday, May 15-16: Pre-Symposium Workshop 1: Upper Tanana River Valley Forestry Tour. Participants of this workshop will require added lodging on Saturday and Sunday, see event website for details. Limit of 25 maximum attendees. Register online by April 30, 2022.

Monday, June 10: Pre-Symposium Workshop 2: Wildland Fire Update. Register online by May 11, 2022.

Monday, June 10: Pre-Symposium Workshop 3: Emerging Technology. Register online by May 11, 2022.

Please note previously advertised Pre-Symposium Workshop: Traditional Crafting Birch Baskets has been **cancelled** due to a lack of materials and instructors.

Symposium Begins, and Registration for all attendees starts at 4:00 pm, and runs until 7:00 pm at the Wedgewood: Visitors Center. Check in and pick up your name tag and symposium materials.

Host Tribe Ice Breaker from 5:00 pm to 7:00 pm at the Wedgewood: Auto Museum. Enjoy hors d'oeuvres and mingle with attendees.

Tuesday, May 17: Registration at the Wedgewood: Visitors Center Lobby, Exhibits, and the Raffle begin at 7:00 am. The symposium officially starts at 8:00 am with the **Opening Ceremony** – Invocation, Posting of the Colors, and Welcomes. **The Keynote: A Retro-**

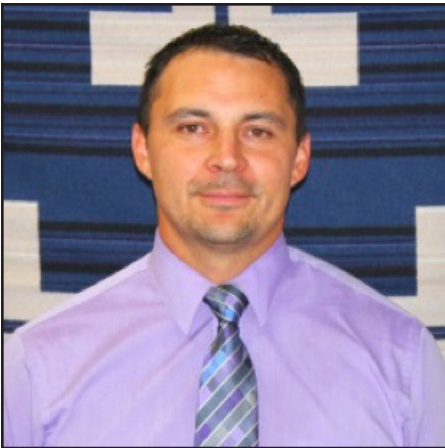
(Continued on page 3)

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Symposium Committee	1
President's Message	2
Operations Committee	5
Legislative Update	6
BIA Forestry and	
Wildland Fire Management	9
Wildland Fire Technical Specialist . . .	16
Education Committee	17
Awards Committee	17

President's Message

by Cody Desautel



Cody Desautel

I hope 2022 is off to a good start for each of you. Thankfully, the pandemic seems to be winding down, and things are starting to return to normal. This report will primarily cover items since our virtual December board meeting and will also include upcoming priorities and engagements.

There continues to be consultation and information sharing about provisions in the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act. ITC has been engaged with central office staff in both DOI and USDA to assist in the development and roll out of these programs. We understand the opportunity that comes with a funding package of this magnitude and want to ensure tribes can utilize it to their fullest capacity. In addition to the consultation being conducted by the funding agencies now, ITC is working with the Forest Service to support their efforts to offer webinars to explain and inform funding available through USDA. This year's Symposium includes updates from the Bureau of Indian affairs, the Office of Wildland Fire, and the Forest Service on infrastructure funding.

ITC is also beginning work on provisions in the 2023 Farm Bill. As you know the 2018 Farm Bill

provided 638 contract authority for USDA for Tribal Forest Protection Act projects. It also expanded the Good Neighbor Authority to include tribes and counties. Through collaborative efforts with other intertribal organizations, we hope to continue authorization for 638 authority and further tribal forest and fire co-management agendas in the 2023 Farm Bill.

On March 8, 2022, the ITC was given the opportunity to testify before the Full House Committee on Natural Resource. The oversight hearing was on "Examining the History of Federal Lands and the Development of Tribal Co-Management." In our testimony we shared the importance of retained rights tribes have on federal lands, and how important tribal management approaches are to improving the health and resilience of those lands. We also included recommendations to increase co-management opportunities on federal forestlands. ITC did learn there will not be an appropriations hearing this year, but we will have the opportunity to submit written testimony. We will continue to lobby for and share the need for additional funding and staffing in Indian country. Particularly with the rate of changing climate and disturbance frequency, the need has never been greater.

In the last newsletter I reported we had an upcoming introductory meeting with the new Forest Service Chief. I am happy to report that meeting went well, and he is committed to continuing the work with tribes and the ITC. He had specific interest in areas where TFPA authority could be further utilized. I encourage tribes considering TFPA projects to reach out to their local forests or ITC if you need assistance developing those

projects to take advantage of current funding opportunities.

ITC is also working with the Forest Service to develop their 10-year wildfire risk reduction implementation plan. The draft Wildfire Crisis implementation plan is available online, and I would encourage tribes to review that document, including the high-risk firesheds map. ITC is hosting two intertribal roundtable discussions to review and provide feedback on the implementation plan with discussions focusing on science supporting wildfire risk reduction; cross boundary partnerships; workforce capacity; outcome-based prioritization; and markets and industry. We encourage you to review the plan and attend the roundtable on April 26.

At the end of March, I will participate in the first Forest and Wood Products Inclusion Council meeting of the US Endowment for Forestry and Communities. The goal of the inclusion council is to "increase social impact, improve the lived experience, and enhance the competitive advantage of the forest and wood products sectors through leadership to address diversity, equity, and inclusion." The role of the council members is to provide strategic guidance that informs a national action plan to accomplish that goal. I will report back on the progress of this group in future newsletters.

We have a busy year ahead us and look forward to collaborating with you to take advantage of the coming opportunities. I also look forward to seeing you at the upcoming ITC symposium in Fairbanks. I am excited to reconnect in person with the ITC family.



Symposium Committee

by Howard Teasley, Jr.

(Continued from cover)



Photo of Tetlin National Wildlife Refuge Visitor Center in Alaska

spective of Tribal Advocacy and Alaska Native Land Rights by Al Ketzler, Sr., Elder Native Leader. The [invited] **Featured Guest Speaker** Deb Haaland, Secretary, DOI, will present next. The morning Panel 1 will consist of the **Central Office Timber Team**. Followed by **Tribal Forestry Challenges, Opportunities, and Partnership: Interviews for Tribal Forestry Workforce Development** and the **ITC Luncheon**. The afternoon Panel 2 is **Bipartisan Infrastructure Law: Funding Opportunities in Forestry and Wildland Fire**. This will conclude the afternoon sessions and the evening events will start at 6:00 pm with the **Host Tribe Welcome Dinner** at the David Salmon Tribal Hall.

Wednesday, May 18: Tanana Chiefs Conference Tribal Tour: Bus loading from 7:30 – 8:00 am at Wedgewood: Visitors Center Lobby. Continental breakfast will be available for purchase in the Wedgewood: Bear Lodge Restaurant from 7:00 - 7:45 am. Please be on time for loading the bus. Lunch (provided) at Pioneer Park. Society of American Foresters members

will be attending jointly for the field trip. The Tribal tour will give visitors the opportunity to hear the history of the tribe and land management practices.

Stop 1: Aurora Energy Solutions: Firewood Processing & Kiln

Stop 2: Joint Fire Science Program: Yankovich Fire Scar Demo

Stop 3: Permafrost Tunnel Research Facility

Stop 4: Fairbanks Fuel Break and Shovel Creek Fire

After the tour, there will be a **General Membership Meeting** at the Wedgewood: Borealis Room, which will be an open forum with topics of discussion given later. This will also give member Tribes the opportunity to communicate with the ITC Board of Directors about their concerns.

Thursday, May 19: The day's activities will start with the ITC President's Report, then the Updates: from Department of Interior Office of Wildland Fire, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Legislative, and U.S. Forest Service Office of Tribal Relations. Immediately following the

Updates our ITC Workshops will start simultaneously:

Workshop 1: Reserved Treaty Rights Land 3.0. We are wanting to show Tribe's with an RTRL Plan or Business Rules and give them examples of how the program relates to the Hazardous fuels program importance that program is reserved for Tribal Fee lands and Ancestral lands that the Tribe has interest in that are not in trust/restricted land ownership status. Encourage them to identify property that they want to complete work on and have a complete a proposal: funding base on 1-4 years with \$1,000,000 cap with the option to file for an extension out to 5 years and \$2,000,000.

Workshop 2: Woody Biomass Energy Development. Substantial developments have been made with biomass energy development across Alaska, resulting from efforts of tribes, local governments, school districts, agencies and interagency groups, academia, and others. This workshop looks to review the challenges encountered with biomass energy development, view examples of

(Continued on page 4)

Symposium Committee

by Howard Teasley, Jr.

(Continued from page 3)

projects, what it takes to implement a successful biomass project, and how these examples may apply to situations elsewhere in the country.

Workshop 3: Climate Change and Fire Effects of Indigenous Lifeways. This workshop will provide background and relevance to the importance of recognizing the impacts of a changing climate to native communities. Alaska has been experiencing profound environmental change related to extreme weather events and deviations from the historical climate. Sustained warmth, sea ice loss, coastal and river corridor flooding, erosion, and significant environmental change have affected the lifeways of Alaskans throughout the state.

Following the workshops there will be the **Annual ITC Business Meeting** at the Wedgewood: Garden Room.

The 45th Annual National Intertribal Timber Symposium will conclude with our **Annual Awards Banquet** to honor and recognize the recipients of any regional or national Earle Wilcox Awards, and the recipients of the Truman D. Picard Scholarship. And finally, the winners of the various Education Committee Raffle prizes will be presented at this time.

Come and visit Alaska! The Tanana Chiefs Conference and Intertribal Timber Council will see you in May.

Visit our website for Symposium information: including registration, agenda, lodging, and exhibitors at www.itcnet.org.

Donation of raffle items for the symposium. Through your generous donations, the ITC generated \$7,924 at the 2019 symposium. All

the funds go towards the ITC Truman D. Picard Scholarship. This scholarship supports Native American students seeking college degrees in the field of natural resources. To date, the ITC has awarded \$1,067,000 in scholarships to 530 native students.

Feel free to bring your gifts to the ITC Symposium in Fairbanks, or you may send your gifts to:

**Will Putman, Forestry Director
Tanana Chiefs Conference –
Forestry Program
Attn: ITC Symposium Raffle
122 First Ave., Ste. 600
Fairbanks, AK 99701**

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

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

This information will help the Committee give credit to the correct donors and send letters of appreciation after the symposium. Donations are tax deductible and receipts are available upon request. Raffle Donor Sheets have been included for your convenience.

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

Here are the future Symposium dates for planning purposes:

June 12-15, 2023 – 46th Annual National Indian Timber Symposium hosted by Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe, Walker, MN

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

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

Searching for a Host Tribe: Each year, the member tribes of Intertribal Timber Council vote by ballot and choose a future site for a tribe wanting to host the event. This occurs during the Annual Business Meeting on Thursday, May 18, 2022, after the Symposium workshops. During the meeting, there is an **Election of Board Members** and a decision on the next location.

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

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

If you are not on the ITC symposium mailing list and would like to receive the annual symposium agenda in the mail, please contact the ITC Office by phone at (503) 282-4296, or email at monica@itcnet.org, or view the ITC website www.itcnet.org.



Operations Committee

by Tony Incashola, Jr.



Tony Incashola, Jr.

The Operations Committee meeting held Wednesday February 16, 2022, via zoom. The meeting was well attended with Tribal, BIA, and USFS representatives present. Following is a summary of the discussions.

IFMAT IV: The Indian Forest Management Assessment Report is a congressionally mandated report to be performed every ten years. The report is designed to be an independent assessment of Indian forest lands by professionals and experts in the natural resource field. The fourth Indian Forest Management Assessment Team (IFMAT) is led by Co-chairs John Gordon and John Sessions. As of February 2021, there have been 18 total tribes that have participated in virtual meetings with the IFMAT team, and 12 tribes have hosted the IFMAT team for an onsite visit. ITC would like to thank the tribes that have taken part in the virtual and site visits to date and would like to encourage all tribes to reach out to ITC or Vinny Corrao if they would like to take part and have not been contacted.

Bipartisan Infrastructure Bill: With the passing of the Bipartisan Infrastructure bill comes wide opportunities for tribes. There are several wildfire resilience and forest

ecosystems provisions within the bill. A total of 3.369 billion over 5 years for USDA and DOI that will improve 10 million acres in WUI or public drinking water source areas on federal, tribal, range land having a very high wildfire hazard potential by 2027. Including funding for wildland firefighter salaries and expenses, mechanical thinning and timber harvesting, prescribed fire, developing or improving control location and fuel breaks, contract labor crews, and post fire restoration project. An added \$2.130 billion for USDA and DOI over 5 years for forest ecosystem restoration projects including stewardship contracts, TFPA, and good neighbor agreements.

This funding comes with questions about coordination between the two departments on how the funding will be distributed and applied for. Prioritizing strategies have begun between DOI and USDA to help ensure equity in funding, and prioritization of Indian country has been included. Concerns of first capacity building on multiple levels ranging from boots on the ground personnel, support and administrative staff, and contract specialist in both departments will need to be addressed to ensure application goals of the bill are met.

Tribal Wood Sourcing: ITC will partner with Sustainable Northwest on a project that will help inform market demand for wood products sourced from tribal forestlands. Sustainable Northwest will gauge demand for timber harvested on Tribal forests by connecting the sustainable building market to wood products fabricated from Tribal wood. Success will connect building projects and project teams to Tribal communities, landscapes, and mills that process tribal wood.

Awareness and relationships will build ongoing interest in Tribal wood sourcing and elevate the profile of Tribal Nations. The project will look to create a list of wood products and suppliers linked to tribally managed forests for purchasers and contractors. The project will also produce a video and communications content that elevate the people, places, and management associated with tribal wood, tribal communities and forests associated with.



Legislative Update

Matt Hill



Matt Hill

Forest Service Wildfire Strategy:

In February, Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack and Forest Service Chief Randy Moore announced the Forest Service's ten-year strategy to combat wildfires, calling for a "paradigm shift" in forest management. The Strategy notes that three factors – fuel buildups in forests, a warming and drying climate, and increasing human development in the Wildland Urban Interface – are behind the increasingly destructive fire seasons.

Vilsack said implementing the Strategy, which calls for treating an additional 20 million acres of National Forests over 10 years, will cost around \$50 Billion. So far, Congress has provided around \$5.5 Billion for the work over the next five years. The strategy also seeks to "support" treatment of up to an additional 30 million acres of other federal, state, Tribal, private, and family lands.

The 20-million-acre figure assumes the Forest Service already treats about 3 million acres a year—a figure often repeated by Forest Service's annual budget submissions to Congress. However, mechanical treatments account for only about 110,000 to 130,000 acres a year, and the effectiveness of other treatments is hard to determine. Much of the 3-million-acre statistic relies on extensive use of prescribed fire, particularly on the National Forests in the South.

The Strategy forthrightly notes that stand densities – the number of trees per acre – contribute to fire intensity. These fuel build ups *"have now reached crisis proportions.... Across the West, ponderosa pine forests historically had 40 to 60 trees of all sizes per acre. Today, many of these same open woodlands have become dense forests with hundreds of trees per acre, including thickets that erupt into devastating wildfires when ignited by people or dry lightning. With such heavy fuel buildups, it is no wonder that wildfire risks across the West are so high."*

The Strategy also notes that in many areas, National Forest timber stands are "overgrown and unhealthy," and that using prescribed fire in these stands "can invite disaster." "Using fire and thinning together," the Strategy says, "provides the best opportunity for reducing risk and moderating fire behavior.... a forest thinning is often needed first to reduce the number of trees to something approaching the historical level a century ago."

It also acknowledges that "about half the land area of the National Forest System in the West is in wilderness areas, roadless areas, and other areas where forest thinning is restricted by law, regulation, or terrain."

Concurrent with the release of the 10-year Strategy, the Forest Service issued a "Implementation Plan." It appears that efforts to narrow down projects for the first round of implementation have relied upon mechanistic application of GIS data to identify the most "at risk" fireheds. These – as directed by Congress – prioritize the WUI and "public watersheds." There is very little interface or accounting for Indian forest lands.

In terms of tribal mentions, there are a few:

- "We share a commitment to consultation with Tribes and ensuring that equity is embedded in this work.
- "...we will launch these projects, as well as focus on coordinating with State and local agencies, communities, collaborative groups, nongovernmental organizations, private landowners, Tribes, and other partners and stakeholders to build the necessary workforce capacity and coalition support for complementary cross-boundary treatments across landownerships."
- "Preconditions for success include...Building workforce capacity in Federal and State agencies as well as in local, Tribal, nongovernmental, and other organizations to coordinate and accomplish the work."

Climate-Smart Agriculture and Forestry Partnership Program:

On February 7, USDA Secretary Vilsack Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack announced that the U.S. Department of Agriculture is delivering on its promise to expand markets by investing \$1 billion in partnerships to support America's climate-smart farmers, ranchers, and forest landowners. The new Partnerships for Climate-Smart Commodities opportunity will finance pilot projects that create market opportunities for U.S. agricultural and forestry products that use climate-smart practices and include innovative, cost-effective ways to measure and verify greenhouse gas benefits. USDA is now accepting project applications for fiscal year 2022.

A "climate-smart commodity" is defined as an agricultural commodity that is produced using agricul-

(Continued on page 7)

Legislative Update

Matt Hill

(Continued from page 6)

tural (farming, ranching or forestry) practices that reduce greenhouse gas emissions or sequester carbon.

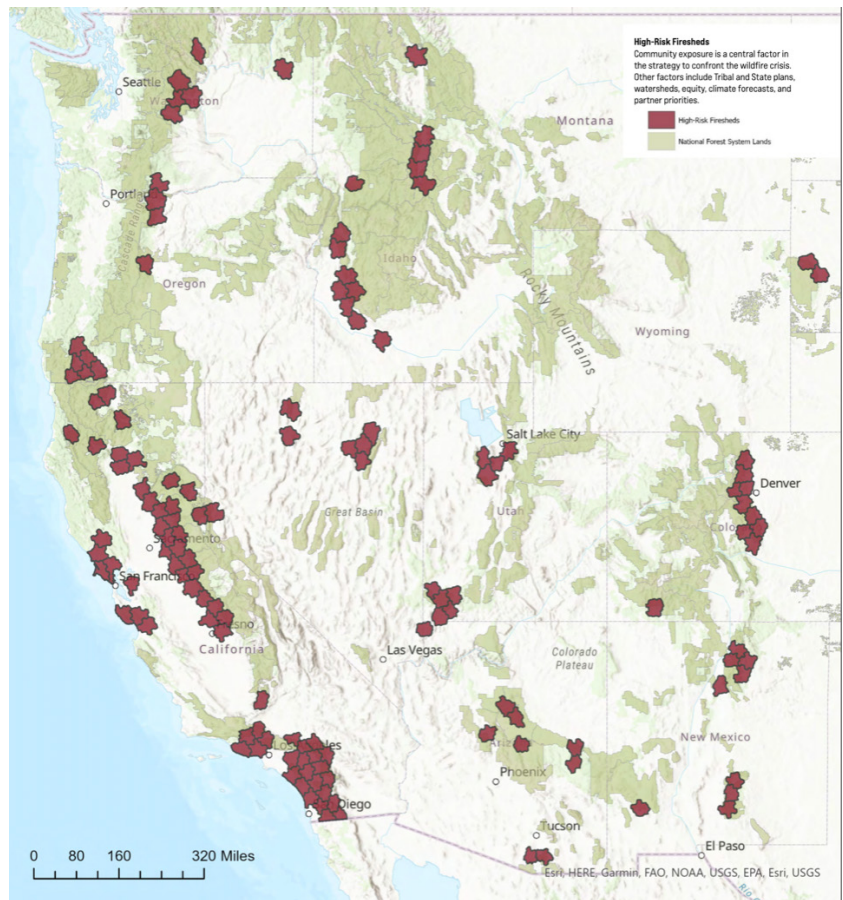
Funding will be provided to partners through the USDA's Commodity Credit Corporation for pilot projects to provide incentives to producers and landowners to:

- implement climate-smart production practices, activities, and systems on working lands,
- measure/quantify, monitor, and verify the carbon and greenhouse gas (GHG) benefits associated with those practices, and
- develop markets and promote the resulting climate-smart commodities.

A range of public and private entities may apply, including:

- County, city, or township governments
- Special district governments
- State governments
- Small businesses
- For profit organizations other than small businesses
- Native American tribal governments (Federally recognized)
- **Native American tribal organizations (other than Federally recognized tribal governments)**
- Nonprofits having a 501(c)(3) (other than institutions of higher education)
- Nonprofits that do not have a 501(c)(3) (other than institutions of higher education)
- Private institutions of higher education, or
- Public and State-controlled institutions of higher education.

The primary applicant must be an entity, not an individual.



Funding will be provided in two funding pools, and applicants must submit their applications via Grants.gov by 11:59 p.m. ET on:

- April 8, 2022, for the first funding pool (proposals from \$5 million to \$100 million), and
- May 27, 2022, for the second funding pool (proposals from \$250,000 to \$4,999,999).

Proposals must provide plans to:

- Pilot implementation of climate-smart agriculture and/or forestry practices on a large-scale, including meaningful involvement of small and/or historically underserved producers;
- Quantify, monitor, report and verify climate results; and
- Develop markets and promote cli-

mate-smart commodities generated because of project activities

2023 Farm Bill Discussions Begin: The 2023 Farm Bill discussions began recently, as the Chair of the House Agriculture Subcommittee on Conservation and Forestry Subcommittee, Rep. Abigail Spanberger (D-VA-7), held a hearing on Farm Bill Conservation Programs. Spanberger set the tone for the hearing supporting a climate focus of the 2023 Farm Bill. She mentioned her support for the Growing Climate Solutions Bill, a bill that provides farm and forest owners incentives to enroll in carbon offset programs.

The House Agriculture Committee leadership is planning to hold oversight hearings with USDA officials and industry groups over the

(Continued on page 8)

(Continued from page 7)

next few months to review current farm bill programs. Republicans on the committee have expressed that they do not want to start full negotiations on 2023 programs until after the November midterms. The Farm Bill is reauthorized every five years and among its authorities is to provide funding for forestry and conservation programs.

New faces at USDA: The Senate has confirmed Homer Wilkes to serve as USDA's Undersecretary of Natural Resources. Dr. Wilkes has worked with USDA for more than 41 years heavily contributing to engineering, natural resource, and watershed projects, as well as forestry and working lands. He served as the Director of the Gulf of Mexico Ecosystem Restoration Division, where he was responsible for the restoration of the coastal ecosystem after the BP oil spill of 2010. Dr. Wilkes is the first African American to hold the position of Under Secretary for Natural Resources and Environment at USDA.

Andrea Delgado was named Chief of Staff at the USDA Natural Resources & Environment (NRE) by Secretary Vilsack. The Natural Resources & Environment office oversees the USDA Forest Service.

Delgado most recently served as the Government Affairs Director at the United Farm Workers Foundation, where she developed and implemented legislative and administrative strategies aimed at improving living and working conditions for agricultural workers across the country. Previously, Delgado held roles of Legislative Director for the Healthy Communities Program and Senior Legislative Representative at Earthjustice. She also spent time as a policy fellow with the

National Latino Coalition on Climate Change. Delgado received her Bachelor of Arts in International Relations from the State University of New York (SUNY) at Geneseo.

Delgado takes over the Chief of Staff role from Christine Dawe, a career Forest Service employee with extensive experience in timber. Dawe has served in several high-ranking positions within the Forest Service. Dawe will stay on in the NRE office as a Senior Advisor.

Biden Administration Consultation on ITEK: The White House Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP) and the White House Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) are hosting a Tribal consultation to discuss the development of Guidance for Federal Agencies on Indigenous Traditional Ecological Knowledge (ITEK). The consultations will take place at the following times:

- Tribal Consultation 1: Tuesday, April 5, 2022. 3:30-5:30 pm EDT Register in advance for the meeting here: https://pitc.zoomgov.com/webinar/register/WN_KM-wXKWx2QFypxyaOgxV2UQ
- Tribal Consultation 2: Friday, April 29, 2022. 3:00 – 5:00 pm EDT Register in advance for the meeting here: https://pitc.zoomgov.com/webinar/register/WN_NOcHbTPzTZSgmhHr9eUcFA

At the Biden Administration's 2021 Tribal Nations Summit last November, OSTP and CEQ issued a memorandum recognizing the importance of ITEK and committing to elevating its role in Federal scientific and policy processes. Since then, OSTP, CEQ, and the White House Domestic Policy Council have convened an Inter-agency Working Group on ITEK and are starting to explore ways to

develop Federal guidance on ITEK for release at the end of the year.

The guidance will include best practices on collaborating with Tribal Nations and knowledge holders to achieve mutually beneficial outcomes, recommendations on how to address potential Federal barriers around working with ITEK, and advice on how to appropriately respect the knowledge holders' rights to decline invitations to collaborate.

The Administration recognizes that the Federal Government should engage with ITEK only through relationships with Tribal Nations and knowledge holders. To that end, the Administration is seeking feedback on the following questions:

- What would you like Federal employees to know about ITEK?
- Thinking about the areas where you engage with the Federal government, how would you like to work with Federal departments and agencies in the future to ensure that ITEK properly informs Federal processes and policies? What challenges do you foresee?
- What terminology should be used (e.g., Indigenous Knowledge, Traditional Ecological Knowledge) when referring to this body of work in the Federal context?
- Are there existing guidance documents, agreements, or practices that provide good examples of how ITEK should be elevated in Federal processes and policies?
- How can the Federal government work with Tribal Nations and knowledge holders to value and protect this knowledge? What ethical considerations should guide efforts to elevate ITEK?



BIA Forestry and Wildland Fire Management

by Peter Wakeland



Peter Wakeland

PLANNING AND PRIORITIES

Communication: If there is anything that you would like to discuss with the Chief Forester, please feel free to call at 720-237-1800, or send an email or video call invite to peter.wakeland@bia.gov.

Indian Trust Asset Reform Act (ITARA): Two more Northwest Tribes have submitted applications to participate in the Demonstration Project. Both applications are currently in the review process. If approved to participate in the project, the Tribes must then develop and submit an Indian Trust Asset Management Plan (ITAMP) for forest land management activities on tribal forest lands held in trust by the Secretary for the benefit of the tribe. Tribes may also submit for Secretary approval, Tribal Forestry Regulations as part of their ITAMP, which would streamline the process for managing tribal trust forests by allowing Tribes certain approval authorities currently held by the Secretary. To be considered for approval by the Secretary, the ITAMP must include certain elements identified in ITARA. The BIA Forestry is currently developing updated ITARA material to share with tribes via webinar. No date has been set yet, but updates and notification will be coming. Interested, eligible Tribes can still apply to participate in the Demonstration Project. For

more information, please contact Pete Wakeland, Chief Forester; peter.wakeland@bia.gov.

Budget / Funding for Forestry Projects: We are currently operating under the first three Continuing Resolutions (CR) for FY 2022, and while we do not have a full budget approved by Congress, we do have funding available for forestry projects. Central Office has received project proposals from the Regions, and the first distributions of funding have been completed. NOW is the time to continue developing proposals at the tribal level so that your projects will be considered for funding during the next distribution. We know there is a lot of work that needs to be accomplished out there, so please get your projects submitted. If you have questions about any of your projects or how to develop them, please contact your Regional Forester; or Caleb Cain, Projects Forester; caleb.cain@bia.gov; or Pete Wakeland, Chief Forester; peter.wakeland@bia.gov.

Infrastructure Bill: Coordination and planning efforts continue on a daily basis. Projects related to climate, habitat restoration, fuels and wildland fire risk reduction, healthy forests, biomass utilization, and cross-boundary data gathering projects to assess risk, health, and management priorities are examples of projects that may be eligible for funding. There are 10 Activity areas identified in the Ecosystem Restoration (ER) portion of the Bipartisan Infrastructure Bill. Each Activity focuses on differing aspects of ER. For some Activities, funding has been allocated to both the Department of the Interior and the Department of Agriculture, and in other Activities the funding lies only with one of the Depart-

ments. The funding levels for each of the Activities and Departments for FY2022 and out-years will be determined very soon.

While much initial work has been accomplished, there is still much that must be done to roll out available funding. BIA Forestry and Wildland Fire Management will continue coordinating and communicating with the ITC so that information can be made available to tribes as quickly as possible. We strongly encourage Tribes to read the bill and be creative in coming up with ideas / projects for possible funding.

Timber Sales Operation Group (TSOG): As part of the effort to revise and combine the timber sale and permit handbooks into one handbook, the TSOG has been updating the contract and permit forms and have made revisions that will require a new release of the 53 IAM Chapter 3 Harvest of Forest Products Manual. Revised contract and permit forms and a revised Manual should be released in the 2nd quarter of FY 22. The handbook draft is nearly complete and most of the work to update the old illustrations is complete.

TAAMS Updates: TAAMS Forestry enhancements submitted and approved in FY 2021 have taken a back burner as the contractor CGI is working to complete and release a new TAAMS probate module. That work is coming to completion, and we are hopeful our forestry enhancements including the timber money ledger will be completed soon. We have also been approved to hold two CGI led TAAMS Forestry sessions in FY-22, subject to change based on Covid restrictions. The planned schedule is: Introductory TAAMS Forestry, April 4-8, 2022 and Advanced TA-

(Continued on page 10)

BIA Forestry and Wildland Fire Management

by Peter Wakeland

(Continued from page 9)

AMS Forestry, April 25-29, 2022. Both courses will be offered in the CGI training room in Dallas Texas.

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

Competency Gap Analysis: Forestry has been working with Office of Personnel Management (OPM) on developing an occupational analysis and gap assessment questionnaire targeted specifically for forestry technicians GS-0462 non-fire role and their supervisors. OPM is working with agency subject-matter experts to systematically identify competency (or skill) gaps for workforce planning and development purposes. OPM's governmentwide competency models are customized to fit the 0460 and 0462 occupation series. These models will provide a framework for identifying gaps in the current workforce and projecting requirements for the future.

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

The following table shows FY 2020 Accomplishment Data:

Region	Reforestation	Stand Improvement	Timber Volume	Timber Volume
	Planted Acres	Thinned Acres	Offered (MBM)	Sold (MBM)
ALASKA REGION	0	19	9,571	10
EASTERN REGION	88	0	17,345	17,345
EASTERN OKLAHOMA REGION	0	25	0	22
GREAT PLAINS REGION	3	58	30	0
MIDWEST REGION	471	1,790	40,803	32,124
NAVAJO REGION	0	155	35,210	32,859
NORTHWEST REGION	13,659	10,001	283,156	248,200
PACIFIC REGION	83	498	1,054	1,054
ROCKY MOUNTAIN REGION	20	315	74	74
SOUTHERN PLAINS REGION	0	0	1	1
SOUTHWEST REGION	130	1,221	58	1,313
WESTERN REGION	154	2,753	320	14,269
NATIONAL TOTALS	14,608	16,835	387,622	347,271

The following table shows a snapshot of some of the accomplishments for the last two fiscal years:

2-Year Forest Development Accomplishments					
REGIONS	FY 2020		FY 2021		Total
	Plant	PCT	Plant	PCT	
Great Plains	3	58	100	70	231
Southern Plains	-	-	-	-	-
Rocky Mtn.	20	330	351	308	1,009
Alaska	-	19	-	13	32
Midwest	471	1,073	315	2,927	4,786
Eastern Oklahoma		25	21	21	67
Western	154	1,525	125	1,769	3,573
Pacific	83	498	-	-	581
Southwest	50	608	50	1,262	1,970
Navajo	-	155	-	-	155
Northwest	2,286	5,387	2,521	8,436	18,630
Eastern	-	-	-	60	60
TOTALS	3,067	9,678	3,483	14,866	31,094

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

TIMBER TEAM

This past December, the Timber Team laid out approximately 300 acres of salvage timber on the Colville Reservation in Washington. Other duties included internal leave tree marking across 100 acres of green tree thinning units.

The team spent three weeks during January to Catawba, SC and Cherokee, NC to assist with timber sale preparation and timber cruising. The team cruised 80 variable radius plots for the Catawba Reservation and then cruised 69 variable radius plots for the Cherokee Reservation.

In February, the team traveled to the Eastern Oklahoma Region to assist the Okmulgee Agency with surveying tribal trust land to identify potential management options that will be

(Continued on page 11)

BIA Forestry and Wildland Fire Management

by Peter Wakeland

(Continued from page 10)

included in the updated Forest Management Plan on 1,300 acres.

The team continues to work on a large-scale GIS forest cover-type mapping project for the Metlakatla Indian Community of Alaska when not conducting field work.

Here is a list of the Timber Team's tentative scheduled for the remaining 2022 calendar year:

April 11 – April 20: Umatilla Reservation Timber Sale Prep; NWR

May 1 – May 8: Standing Rock CFI; GPR

May 16 – May 20: ITC Symposium; Fairbanks, AK (Half Timber Team)

May 16 – May 20: Fort Belknap Fire Salvage; RMR (Other Half Timber Team)

May 22 – May 30: Cheyenne River CFI; GPR

May 30 – June 7: Sisseton CFI; GPR

June 13 – June 17: Crow Agency Fire School; RMR (Half Timber Team)

June 13 – June 17: Fort Belknap Fire Salvage; RMR (Other Half Timber Team)

June 20 – July 1: Tentatively Makah, WA, or Coquille, OR; NWR (Stand Exams/Sale Prep)

July 2 – July 10: July 4th Scheduled Annual Leave for Timber Team (No Traveling)

July 11 – July 15: Tentative assistance with Crow or Northern Cheyenne Reservations (Sale Prep); RMR

July 18 – July 29: Flathead Reservation Timber Sale Prep; NWR

August 14 – August 27: Umatilla Reservation Timber Sale Prep; NWR

September 6 – September 16: Tentatively Makah, WA, or Coquille, OR; NWR (Stand Exams/Sale Prep)

September 26 – October 7: Ten-

tatively RMR (Crow or Northern Cheyenne)

October 17 – October 29: Available for fire salvage

November 14 – 18: Available for fire salvage

November 19 – November 27: Thanksgiving Holidays (No Traveling)

November 28 – December 16: Available for fire salvage

December 17 – January 3: Christmas/New Year's Holidays (No Traveling)

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

BRANCH OF FOREST RESOURCES PLANNING (BOFRP)

BOFRP Projects: The BOFRP team is actively working on 13 forest inventory projects and is busy preparing the CFI materials for 9 CFI projects this year. The team is also cleaning and processing four projects that were returned to BOFRP after the tribe has completed their data collection. In addition, the team is also providing support on 51 projects currently at the Region, Agency, and Tribe in collecting data, writing their FIA, or cleaning up data to return to BOFRP. If you have questions or are looking for a status update for your forest inventory, requests can be sent to Dawn. Patterson@bia.gov.

Application Development: The Windows tablet-based field data collector has been deployed in the

field and is currently active in CFI data collection. Several issues and improvements have been identified and suggested during this first inventory season for the tablet. While current feedback has been favorable, the development team is working to improve performance and implement some needed changes and enhancements. These enhancements will be implemented and available for the next inventory season. However, some modifications will be deployed in the currently active inventory season.

The BOFRP team is also compiling the national standardization of field data items collected nationwide. The collective effort to document all field data items and codes used for plots, trees, and regeneration will help streamline the inventory process. In addition, it will highlight how the analysis program reads the outputs from our processing and subsequently develop national standards and a single analysis program. Once the national standardization is complete BOFRP will work with the Inventory Planning Operations Group (IPOG) and FMIP foresters to review and finalize a national standard.

FVS STEERING COMMITTEE UPDATES

The BIA representative attended the annual FVS Steering committee meeting. At this meeting, BIA feedback to the FVS administrative and development team was provided, which included concerns about the FVS model's trouble with regeneration data collected from CFI projects and positive feedback regarding the new interface. The FVS team reluctantly acknowledged the model's failings at simulating accurate small tree growth and mortality. The FVS team reported on their lessons learned from developing and fitting the Alaska Vari-

(Continued on page 12)

(Continued from page 11)

ant equations and suggested that a nationwide effort to revamp all of their Variants and equations should be undertaken. The FVS team, and the USFS in general, expect a large influx of funding and plan to hire multiple foresters and programmers to provide better model support and development. Currently, the FVS is understaffed and voiced concern about retaining new hires. The FVS team reported a need to update the Climate-FVS model as the developer who created that model has since retired, and a legacy plan to maintain that model does not exist. The FVS team also discussed their experience with having 100% of their training sessions online last year due to the pandemic and reported that students overwhelmingly requested in-person training sessions. The FVS team stated their efforts in hosting this training online were equally time-consuming than in-person events. The FVS team continues to record training videos that are freely available on their website. The FVS team discussed the upcoming conference in Fort Collins, Colorado, in 2023, which gives the user base an opportunity to present FVS-related research and network with other FVS users. Requests for presentations will go out shortly, so BOFRP staff will work with Regional and Tribal foresters to get the word out to FVS users to either submit original research or think about attending this in-person event. If you have questions or need additional information, requests can be sent to benjamin.bagdon@bia.gov.

NATIONAL ADVANCED SILVICULTURE PROGRAM (NASP)

The goal of the NASP is to provide continuing education in advanced silviculture concepts. The students

we sponsor are encouraged to complete the silviculturist certification process and become certified. This rigorous and academically challenging program is taught at four different Universities for eight weeks/313 contract hours, now held virtually.

- Module 1: Ecological Systems – University of Minnesota
- Module 2: Inventory & Decision Support – Oregon State University
- Module 3: Landscape Ecology – University of Northern Arizona
- Module 4: Advanced Silviculture Topics – Virginia Tech

This year, seven application packages for NASP Class 16 (2022/2023) were received from the Alaska, Northwest, and Southwest Regions. As a result, five out of seven BIA and Tribal Forester candidates were selected and nominated to attend NASP Class 16. Final selections were announced on February 11, 2022, after the USFS determined the final student count.

POSITION TASK BOOK FOR CERTIFYING SILVICULTURIST

The BOFRP NASP representatives met with the USFS National Silviculturist and Rocky Mountain Regional Silviculturist to discuss adapting the USFS Silviculture Position Task Book (PTB) for use by BIA and Tribal Foresters interested in pursuing their national silviculturist certification. The PTB describes the candidate's qualifications for the role of certified silviculturist. Key components in this task book include task table, evaluation record, National Advanced Silviculture Program (NASP) documentation and completion record, and additional training record. The USFS supports the BIA making changes to the PTB to make it applicable to BIA and Tribal Foresters. In addition, BOFRP developed

a crosswalk spreadsheet to bridge the current gap between USFS and BIA and Tribal specific tasks, signing authorities, and policy such as forest management, Forest Development, Timber Sales, and NEPA requirements.

The draft task book and crosswalk spreadsheet were forwarded to each BIA Regional Forester on February 24, 2022, for their review and to provide any necessary changes back to BOFRP by March 18, 2022. If you have questions or need additional information, requests can be sent to angelo.waqui@bia.gov or stephen.singleton@bia.gov.

WELCOME NEW TEAM MEMBER – VIOLET HOLLEY!

Violet Holley is a member of the Dena'ina Athabaskan from the Tebughna tribe of the Western Cook Inlet in Alaska. She was named after



her grandmother Violet Kroto from the Nulchina clan. Violet began her career in Natural Resource Management as a Crew Member/Squad Boss on a type 2 fire crew in Alaska in 2001, where she worked for five seasons. In the meantime, she attended Fort Lewis College to complete her pre-requisites and general

(Continued on page 13)

BIA Forestry and Wildland Fire Management

by Peter Wakeland

(Continued from page 12)

education before transferring to the University of Montana in Missoula, MT. Violet received a degree in Natural Resource Management with an emphasis in Forest Management. In 2006 she worked for the Forest Service on a Fire Ecology Crew with the Rocky Mountain Research Station Fire Sciences Lab in Missoula, Montana, while going to school. During her time with the Forest Service, Violet gained experience in fuel and vegetation surveys, data entry, lab work, silviculture, timber sale prep, timber marking, layout, and cruising on the Kaibab NF Coconino NF in Arizona. One summer away from the USFS, she worked with the NPS on a botany crew performing botany surveys in the Redwood NP. In 2015, she moved from Flagstaff, AZ, to Colorado to work on the Medicine Bow-Routt NF as a Timber Sale Administrator out of Walden, CO. Violet joined the Bureau of Indian Affairs Inventory Forester as an Inventory Forester. She is happy to have the opportunity to work for such a top-notch group! So far, she is enjoying the new position and looks forward to meeting more of the team and seeing the BIA's work across the country. Outside of work, Violet enjoys the struggles of gardening in Northern Colorado, Skijoring with her Husky/Shepard, hiking, and camping. She and her furry friend are excited to explore the trails and sights around the Front Range! The views are stunning so far.

BRANCH OF WILDLAND FIRE MANAGEMENT

FUELS MANAGEMENT

The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) has directed the Office of Wildland Fire (OWF) to submit a preliminary program of work from each bureau for FY22-26 by

March 14, 2022. In order to collect and review the project and treatment data prior to submitting it to OWF, BIA set our due date for March 7, 2022. Below are examples of what is entered into NF-PORS as required by BIL:

BIL General Funds

BIL Thinning/Harvest Funds

BIL Prescribed Fire Funds

BIL Control Locations Funds

BIL Laborers Funds

Planned Acres

Acres Monitored

It is critical for regions to interact on an active management concept to optimize Indian Country's capacity and capabilities of identifying areas of High and Very High risk to wildfire, and then plan to treat those identified areas.

Below is the Fuels Treatment Effectiveness Monitoring (FTEM) 2021 Accomplishment Report. It shows that Indian Country continues to be a leader in FTEM reporting as reflected below:

	Changed Fire Behavior	Help Control or Manage Fire	Strategically Placed
BIA	98%	98%	98%
BLM	63%	61%	69%
NPS	89%	89%	87%
FWS	87%	97%	98%

The FTEM reporting system continues to show the benefits and the value of fuels management in Indian Country. Wildfires impact Indian Country's fuels treatments frequently and the fuels treatments regularly mitigate fire behavior and help firefighters control wildfires. The strategic placement and regular maintenance of Indian Country fuels treatments result in smaller wildfires.

These FTEM metrics highlight the essential role that fuels management plays in wildfire risk reduction.

PREVENTION

The 90IAM 6 - H Wildfire Investigation Handbook has been revised and is out for comment. The final version is expected to be approved by June 1.

The BIA Regional Prevention Specialists have actively engaged with human resources and the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) to develop several standard position descriptions (SPD) for the prevention program. Currently, there are five submitted to OPM for SPD review and approval that are specific to agency-level programs. A Regional Prevention Specialist SPD has been developed and is out for review and comment. Approval for all of these positions are anticipated this fiscal year.

Regional WUI Prevention Specialists continue to provide technical assistance to agency and tribal wildfire prevention programs in transitioning their program requirements into the Wildfire Prevention Spatial Assessment and Planning Strategies (WPSAPS) software application. The requirement to transition by January 1, 2022, has been completed. The WPSAPS application will provide for online risk assessments, planning strategies using research-based efficiencies and online program accomplishment reporting for Indian Country's wildfire prevention programs.

A late spring/early summer WPSAPS virtual training is being planned for wildfire prevention program staff as well as other potential users. Contact your Regional WUI/Prevention Specialist for details or visit the Communication,

(Continued on page 14)

BIA Forestry and Wildland Fire Management

by Peter Wakeland

(Continued from page 13)

Education, and Prevention Committee webpage here for additional information.

OPERATIONS

BIA wildland fire operations is currently establishing policy for wildland fire equipment and safety. The policy will be directed to wildland fire engines that are owned and/or leased to the BIA. The policy is intended to mitigate risks and increase public and firefighter safety by implementing additional vehicle inspection and maintenance requirements, tire inspection and replacement requirements, and a fire equipment deficiency, major repair, or improvement reporting system. These requirements will create a standardized process to inspect, maintain, and improve the Bureau's wildland fire equipment.

National Multi-Agency Coordinating Group (NMAC)/Interagency:

1. The 2022 National Mobilization Guide has been posted to the National Interagency Coordination Center (NICC) website as of March 2, 2022. The document establishes the standards for mobilization and demobilization of resources in response to wildland fire and all-hazard events. It is the foundational document instituting overarching processes for total mobility of interagency resources. For the 2022 version of the document, an appendix has been added (pages 105 through 120) documenting the changes made over the previous years' version through efforts of the NMAC and other committees and working groups.
2. The NMAC along with other committees and geographic areas continue to focus on the implementation of Complex Incident



Trainees take on the trainer position in this ENOP exercise in Phoenix, AZ.

Management Team (CIMT) concepts. CIMT is a revised process in which Incident Management Teams (IMT) may be re-designed to mitigate concerns related to fatigue, IMT availability, and balance Incident Management Team assignments nationally. The CIMT will standardize IMT mobilization processes across all geographic areas and improve participation on IMTs. The CIMT concept and process has been accepted by the interagency partners, however, the timeframes, specific design, and implementation are still being evaluated.

TRAINING

- BWFM Training is currently funding and facilitating two engine operator courses (ENOP) utilizing our train the trainer model. One course is being held in Phoenix, AZ and the other in Tulsa, OK. This course and the new position qualification requirement have been designed to improve safety and tactical use of our engine fleet. It also seeks to further professionalize our engine personnel.
- BWFM Training is planning for and will be sponsoring two fire personnel to take part in the fall 2022 Wildland Fire Apprenticeship Academy. Our reengagement in this established program exposes our burgeoning future fire leaders to leadership concepts, men-

torship, and a well-structured field component. Our plan is to sponsor up to 10 students for spring 2023. These WFAP positions will be advertised on USAJobs.gov once planning, design and development stages are complete.

SAFETY

- The National Wildfire Coordinating Group (NWCG) recently released A Preparedness Guide for Wildland Firefighters and Their Families. This document is developed and maintained by the Mental Health Subcommittee (MHSC) under the direction of the Risk Management Committee. This document represents a successful interagency effort to support firefighters and their families.
- The Wildland Fire Lessons Learned Center continues to be an excellent resource for information regarding wildland fire incidents. The Incident Review Database, within the Lessons Learned Center site, provides access to historical lesson learned and other reports. This is an excellent information source for pre and post season training: <https://www.wildfirelessons.net/home>
- COVID mitigation continues to be a key topic of interest. Guidance and direction will be released as drafted and approved.

(Continued on page 15)

(Continued from page 14)

BUDGET

- The Division of Wildland Fire Management has recently received funding for Continuing Resolution #3 (CR#3). This is a short-term CR and funds will be allocated out as appropriate.
- Suppression funding for FY22 has been allocated down to the regional level for suppression costs.
- The Division of Wildland Fire Management is currently recruiting for the Budget Officer position. This position announcement is currently open on USAjobs.gov.

AVIATION

BIA National Aviation Training will be held March 14-18, in San Diego, CA. The training will focus on M3 - Aviation Management for Supervisors, RT273 SEMG Refresher, RT372 HMGB Refresher, Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM), DOI/BIA Compliance Training and BIA Aviation updates.

PLANNING

Planning related to the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL): The BIL, which was enacted into law in late 2021, identifies significant federal funding for wildland fire management, forestry, ecosystem restoration, and other land management business lines. This funding will be applied over a 5-year period starting with the current fiscal year, FY22, and continuing through FY26.

For wildland fire management, the total funding identified for Department of Interior (DOI) Agencies is nearly \$1.5 billion, with the investments reflecting priorities such as: enhancing the workforce and increasing firefighter pay, hazardous fuels management, technology for fire detection, slip-on tanker units, and rehabilitation of burned areas.

In combination with the Justice40 Executive Order's goal, to ensure 40% of federal investments and benefits relating to climate and clean energy are targeted for disadvantaged communities, the BIL will provide tremendous opportunities for Indian Country's wildland fire management programs.

The DOI's Office of Wildland Fire (OWF) is coordinating the planning and data gathering with BIA and the other DOI agencies to finalize the BIL spend plan that represents OWF's overall BIL funding framework. The BIA planners are assisting in coordinating this effort, working with OWF, the BIA Office of Trust Services, other BIA Wildland Fire Management staff, and colleagues at the regions and in other agencies. To date, most efforts have been focused on raising awareness on BIL, coordinating with OWF, and preliminary planning; however, the pace is escalating as those spend plans should be finalized by mid-March, and initial allocations of BIL funding is expected in April or May.

Changes/impacts in National Fire Danger Rating System (NFDRS) and related fire environment decision support systems: The implementation of the new version of NFDRS (version 4, which was developed in 2016) was planned for completion by the end of 2021; however, there is significant work remaining. Support for NFDRSv3 will formally stop on May 31, with a "soft" cutoff date of March 15. Fire Danger Operating Plans (FDOP) and firefighter safety PocketCards should be updated to use NFDRSv4; however, those products are not in place for many units in Indian Country or they have not completed the transition yet. Minimally, weather station information needs to be updated in

the Weather Information Management System (WIMS) to ensure NFDRS outputs can be generated. In addition to supporting the field with these tasks, the Planners/Analysts are also assisting in the efforts to transition higher-level NFDRS-related products that are used for preparedness and readiness decision support (including Severity justifications) at the Regional, Geographic Area, and national levels. These products include the fire danger charts associated with individual weather stations and Predictive Services Areas, the 7-Day Significant Fire Potential products, and the Monthly/Seasonal Fire Outlook products. Planners are also assisting with the updating and delivery of WIMS and NFDRS coursework and workshops.

Changes in fire occurrence data and fire reporting application:

In late March, the Interagency Fire Occurrence Reporting Modules (InFORM) application will implement its first major upgrade (to version 2) since its inception in 2020. While most of the changes in InFORMv2 pertain to its record structure and how it exchanges data with other fire management computer applications, it will also implement the new interagency data standard for fire cause information. The Wildland Fire Management Information (WFMI) System, which was used for fire reporting prior to InFORM, will be completely retired from service on April 15, and its fire report records (from 2019 and earlier) will be archived. Certain data from those historical fire reports will be migrated to InFORM to create an interagency historical fire occurrence dataset that is planned for release in May.



Wildland Fire Technical Specialist

by Jim Durglo



Jim Durglo

Underutilized tools are available for tribes to develop partnerships and perform much needed fuels reduction/landscape restoration work cross boundary. The Tribal Forest Protection Act (TFPA), Indian Self Determination and Education Assistance Act, (PL 93-638), Reserved Treaty Rights Lands (RTRL) fuels funding, and the Good Neighbor Authority are new authorities that are available to tribes. In this article I will highlight work being done with RTRL funding.

Ancestral rights associated with non-trust, non-reservation land is of critical importance to many American Indians and Alaska Natives across the United States. Beginning in Fiscal Year 2015, \$10 million annually in Wildland Fire Management funding was appropriated for the purpose of treating and restoring tribal priority landscapes within and next to ancestral and reserved treaty right lands. This resulted in the establishment of the RTRL program. The RTRL program provides funding to enable American Indian Tribes and Alaskan Natives to take part in collaborative projects with other landowners (federal, state, private, and others) to enhance the health and resiliency of priority tribal natural

resources at elevated risk to wildland fire.

Using RTRL funding and other authorities tend to force cross-boundary collaboration facilitating comprehensive land management treatments. These treatments are designed to positively affect reserved treaty rights resources while moving tribal priority landscapes to desired future conditions and long-term ecologic resilience to wildland fire.

The RTRL funding does not come without debate. Many tribes contend that funding from the DOI/BIA should be allocated to tribes to accomplish tribal hazard fuels reduction priorities on tribal trust lands.

The Fort Apache Agency has an Interagency Agreement with the Coronado National Forest that allows the Agency to work on prescribed and mechanical fuels treatments on the Santa Catalina Ranger District, Sierra Vista Ranger District, and Douglas Ranger District states Keith Burnette, BIA Western Region FMO.

Doreen Ethelbah-Gatewood and Keith Burnette write this project keeps a timeless connection between the Apache People and the land. Lands now managed by Coronado National Forest were once home to Apache leaders including Geronimo and Cochise. Some crew members tell stories of traveling as children to the area with their grandparents to collect Acorn, an important food source. "Our ancestors lived here once before," said crewmember Jeremy Harlan. "It's a blessing to come back here, walking where they once walked, where they once lived."

Reed Robinson, FS OTR, Doreen Ethelbah-Gatewood, Liv Fetter-



Photo of Fuels reduction projects on the Coronado National Forest in Arizona completed by the White Mountain Apache Tribe, Fuels Crew using Reserved Treaty Rights Lands fuels funding.

man, FS Tribal Relations Specialists, Kurt Davis, Forest Supervisor on the Coronado, and Keith Burnette, BIA Western Region Fuels Manager and the White Mountain Fuels crew should be acknowledged for the success of this partnership.

Even though there is debate about RTRL, it does have tremendous benefits as noted and many tribes are taking advantage of the opportunity it provides. Funding levels for RTRL is increasing over the next few years. One recommendation to improve the use of this program is to provide more information to interested partners about the availability of this funding source.

To learn more about RTRL, contact Mark Jackson, BIA Director, Fuels Management at the National Interagency Fire Center in Boise, Idaho.



Education Committee

by Nicole Stiffarm



Nicole Stiffarm

Greetings ITC family, I hope that you're reading this newsletter in good health. The Education Committee convened virtually in February and discussed Truman Picard Scholarships, the Tribal Forestry Student Summit, and the fast-approaching 2022 ITC Symposium in Fairbanks, AK. I am pleased to report that we have selected a panel to review the completed Truman D. Picard Scholarship applications. I am grateful to each of the educa-

tion committee members who continually offer their time and support of the next generation of professional foresters. The next issue of Timber Notes will include a full list of the 2022 Truman D. Picard Scholarship recipients.

Regarding the Tribal Forestry Student Summit, I am pleased to report that we have come to the decision to host a hybrid Tribal Student Summit in partnership with Northern Arizona University. Save the date for October 12-14, 2022. As we continue planning for the summit, a more detailed announcement will be released soon.

We are gearing up to gather in person at this year's Symposium, I would like to take a moment to remind you all that the raffle that will also be taking place during the Symposium. As the Education Committee Chair, it is incumbent on me to relay how impactful this scholarship can be to the students who receive it. All proceeds from the raffle support the scholarship

fund, so if possible, please consider supporting the raffle. We and the students always appreciate it wholeheartedly. I hope to see you all in person this coming May in Fairbanks, AK!



Awards Committee

by Will Putman



Will Putman

The ITC Awards Committee met virtually during the winter ITC Board meetings, with the primary agenda item being the review of

award nominations and selection of the 2022 Earle R. Wilcox Award recipients. Several of the award nominations had been received by the January 28, 2022, deadline and committee members had a chance to review the nomination packages for about two weeks prior to the meeting. Many thanks are due to the individuals who stepped up to help review award nominations this year. It was a great group, and there were good discussions about the nominees. Many thanks are also due to the folks out in Indian country who took the time to submit nominations. Award recipients

will be announced and recognized at the Annual Awards Banquet on the final night of the 45th Annual National Indian Timber Symposium being hosted by the Tanana Chiefs Conference on May 16-19, 2022, in Fairbanks, Alaska. We will see you there!



SAVE THE DATE!!

TUESDAY, APRIL 26, 2022

10am-1pm PT/11am-2pm MT/12pm-3pm CT/1-4pm ET

Wildfire Crisis Implementation Plan Intertribal Roundtable

Zoom Registration Link at www.itcnet.org

The USDA Forest Service is developing a 10-year Implementation Plan for the Confronting the Wildfire Crisis Strategy. Collaboration with Tribal communities is integral to developing this Plan. Forest Service-managed lands are co-located with and adjacent to Tribal lands and resources, including lands at risk for wildfire. Tribal practitioners bring critical knowledge and experience to wildland fire research and management.

Wildfires in the U.S. have been growing in size, duration, and destruction over the past 20 years, reaching crisis proportions in the West. Nearly a quarter of the contiguous U.S. is faced with moderate to very high risk of wildfire; over half of that area at risk is in the West. In response, the Forest Service is seeking input from interested and affected Tribes and other communities to inform the development of a comprehensive 10-Year Strategic Implementation Plan. This Plan will support landscape-level management and restoration of millions of acres of land toward improved forest health and watershed function, wildlife habitat, and the protection of communities and critical infrastructure.

In partnership with the Intertribal Timber Council (ITC), the Forest Service is hosting a national roundtable discussion to engage on Tribal-specific issues and concerns related to this process. This roundtable will ensure Tribal interests, insights, and concerns are identified and incorporated into the Implementation Plan and will identify potential new or expanded roles for Tribes in future restoration work. The goals of the roundtable are to:

- share information, goals, and timelines for the 10-Year Strategic Implementation Plan;
- identify Tribal concerns, priorities, strategies and objectives to inform the Plan;
- provide an opportunity for dialogue among Forest Service and Tribal leaders and staff to identify key needs and opportunities of the Plan; and
- identify opportunities for continued coordination and collaboration between the Forest Service and Tribes to implement the 10-year Plan.

This Intertribal roundtable is a tribal-specific dialogue and, along with regional roundtables (hosted by the National Forest Foundation), will help inform the Implementation Plan. We encourage Tribes to review the Draft Implementation Plan and join the intertribal session or one or more of the regional sessions. Discussions will focus on the science supporting wildfire risk reduction (including indigenous traditional ecological knowledge); cross-boundary partnerships; workforce capacity; strategic prioritization; and markets and industry. This intertribal session is intended for Tribal leadership and Tribal staff (including Tribal wildfire and fuels reduction staff, forestry, natural resources, watershed, cultural resources, and other staff focusing on forests and grasslands).

The Forest Service is consulting separately with Tribal leaders in formal Government-to-Government consultation on Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) provisions, including wildfire risk reduction. If you would like further details on the BIL Government-to-Government consultation, please visit <https://www.fs.usda.gov/working-with-us/tribal-relations/events>. You can also send questions to: sm.fs.otrtribalcon@usda.gov.

Forty-Fifth Annual National Indian Timber Symposium
"Connecting Tribes and Land Management"
May 16 – 19, 2022
Host: Tanana Chiefs Conference, Fairbanks, AK

Register online at
<https://www.eventsquid.com/event/15815>

ITC requires COVID-19 vaccination of all attendees. Everyone must provide proof of vaccination in advance of the meeting. After registering online, email a photo of your vaccination card to monica@itcnet.org.

Max attendee limit of 200 event-wide due to space limitations at the hotel. Onsite registration will not be available.
Online registration closes May 11, 2022. Register now!!

<u>Registration Fee Types</u>	<u>Early Price Up to April 8</u>	<u>Late Price April 9 to May 11</u>
General or Associate Member	\$275.00	\$375.00
Government Employee	\$300.00	\$400.00
All Others	\$325.00	\$425.00
Pre-Symposium Workshops	\$105.00	\$120.00
Exhibit Booth Space (1 registration) Exhibit Terms: Subletting or sharing space is prohibited. Registration is for the use of exhibitor & nontransferable.	\$750.00	\$850.00
<u>Merchandise</u>		
Company Registration Packet Inserts	\$500.00	<u>No Onsite Sales of Guest Meal Tickets</u> Purchase online until May 11. Guests must have COVID-19 vaccination.
Guest Luncheon Ticket	\$ 30.00	
Guest Awards Banquet Ticket	\$ 50.00	

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

Pre-conference workshop fees include lunch.

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

Payments must be received by Friday, May 6, 2022, please mail to our NEW address:

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

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

- All refund requests must be in writing.
- Refund requests received after Friday, April 29, 2022, will be charged a \$100 processing fee.
- No refunds will be issued after Friday, May 6, 2022.
- An NSF fee will be charged for returned checks.



INTERTRIBAL TIMBER COUNCIL

PO BOX 11790

Portland, Oregon 97211

First Class
