

State and Private Forestry Tribal Relations Program in Regions 1& 4

National Forest system lands are original homelands for many Indian tribes and are important sources of subsistence foods, supplies and medicines. The Forest Service's Northern Region, Region 1, manages 25 million acres of national forests and national grasslands in principally northern Idaho, Montana and North Dakota, while the Intermountain Region, Region 4, manages 34 million acres of national forest lands in principally southern Idaho, Nevada and Utah. See map of the two regions below.



Eighty-five tribes and two tribal organizations either reside or have interests in Forest Service Regions 1 and 4. Many tribal interests span multiple forests and often overlap with those of other tribes. Most national forests maintain relationships with several tribes, and, in the case of the Humboldt-Toiyabe, 36 tribes. Refer to separate list of states and tribes on this website Adding to the complexity, many tribes have unique and specific rights reserved by treaty or Executive Order, while other tribes may not even be federally recognized.

Tribal Relations Organization

The Tribal Relations Program for Regions 1 and 4 is under the State and Private Forestry staff group. The Regions share an overall Tribal Relations Program Manager, supervised by the Director of State and Private Forestry. The Clearwater, Nez Perce, and Payette National Forests share a Tribal Liaison to the Nez Perce Tribe. This position was created under an MOU with the Nez Perce which outlines the FS and Tribe's commitment to develop and maintain strong working relationships between the two governments. The Kootenai National Forest contracts to the Confederated Salish-Kootenai Tribes for a full-time liaison. Remaining tribal relations roles on the remaining national forests within the two regions are typically collateral duties assigned to national forest staff.

Projects of Interest

Bridging the Divide Natural & Cultural Resources Field Camp - Beaverhead-Deerlodge NF

Shoshone-Bannock junior and senior high students from Fort Hall, Idaho traveled to the Dillon Ranger District to learn about cultural landscapes and tribal traditions associated with camas/wet meadow ecology of southwest Montana. Tribal elders helped students learn about: prehistory, history and tribal use of the area; traditions skills like making digging sticks from native maples, bark bags from lodge pole and fir trees, and cordage from dogbane fibers; harvesting and baking camas; and understanding ecology of camas and wet meadow environments by conducting vegetative transects and digging soil pits.

McGinnis-Cabin Hazardous Fuels Project – Lolo National Forest

The Lolo National Forest strengthened its working relationship with the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes by engaging in a stewardship partnership agreement to implement the McGinnis Cabin fuels reduction project along the forest boundary shared by the Plains/Thompson Falls Ranger District and the Flathead Indian Reservation.

Tongue River Breaks Cultural Landscape Survey – Custer National Forest

This project started in 2010 with Heritage Stewardship Enhancement funding from R1 and in partnership with Nance Petroleum, Montana State University-Bozeman, the Northern Cheyenne Tribe and the Custer National Forest to inventory the ethno-historical landscape and excavations at Horseshoe Cave. Information from the study *Northern Cheyenne Ethno-geography of the Tongue River/Powder River Plateau* completed by students in 2010 in partnership with Chief Dull Knife College, will be used for this project.

Inter-Tribal Youth Natural Resource Camp

The Idaho Panhandle National Forest and Coeur d'Alene Tribe co-hosted the 22nd annual camp in Plummer, Idaho. Each year the Idaho Panhandle, Clearwater and Nez Perce, Payette, and Colville national forests join forces with the Coeur d'Alene Tribe, Nez Perce Tribe, Colville Confederated Tribes, Kalispel Tribe of Indians, and Spokane Tribe of Indians to provide a week-long camp where student volunteers learn about resource issues and careers through hands-on field work and interactive workshops conducted by resource professionals.



South Fork Salmon River Aquatic Restoration Partnership – Boise NF

In 2009 the Boise National Forest and Nez Perce Tribe joined in a Master Participating Agreement to develop a partnership for restoration of habitat for culturally important aquatic species, particularly salmon listed under the Endangered Species Act. In 2010 the Tribe and Forest began the first project to remove fish barriers and re-connect 12 miles of high-quality spawning habitat for listed Chinook salmon, steelhead trout and bull trout. The project will also provide access to cold water refuge for the next 10-20 years during the recovery of the 2007 Cascade Complex Wildfire which impacted stream habitat.