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# Tribal Relations News

## Director's Welcome

In our search for better ways to share examples and outcomes from the U.S. Forest Service's relationships with Tribes, we are proposing to host articles on the [U.S. Forest Service Office of Tribal Relations website](#), eventually retiring the current newsletter format of *Tribal Relations News*. The Tribal Relations Program has been considering this change for some time, and we are excited that we can now carry it forward. The proposed web format will allow OTR to share events in a more timely manner and allow for both contributors and readers to more readily share submissions with a wider audience. Rebecca Hill is working closely with the Office of Communications, and I know she would greatly appreciate hearing from you during the development of the new approach to telling these fascinating stories. We anticipate that new articles will start showing up on the OTR website this Fall.

We continue this edition with an article that honors Elizabeth Peratrovich, a Tlingit activist who courageously confronted discrimination to defy inequality — foundational work for the 1945 enactment of the Alaska Anti-Discrimination Act.

Turning to the Southwest, we visit the Dragoons, the mountain range on the Coronado National Forest and the location of the Cochise Stronghold and Council Rocks, where the Apache leader Cochise eventually agreed to a peace treaty. We also see how the Forest Service continues to partner with the Hopi Tribe to restore springs on the Tonto and Kaibab National Forests in the Southwestern Region. In addition to accomplishing important restoration work on the Forests, this partnership enables the Tribe to inform future management practices with traditional ecological knowledge and provides a venue for Tribal elders and youth share experiences with one another. We also hear how the Pueblo of Jemez constructed a new pellet mill.

In the Eastern Region, the Shawnee National Forest was honored at the 2017 To Bridge a Gap Meeting for research on the Trail of Tears in partnership with Southern Illinois University and for bringing Native children from removed Tribes back to their ancestral homelands. Passport in Time volunteers at the Forest have also been raising awareness about the Trail of Tears National Historic Trail through quilting. For the third consecutive year, the Forest hosted youth from removed Tribes now located in Oklahoma for the week-long *More Kids in the Woods* program, and this summer marked the first Shawnee Youth Corps on the Forest.

In the Pacific Northwest, we learn about a successful partnership between the Swinomish Tribal Community, Sauk-Suiattle Indian Tribe and the U.S. Forest Service to enhance 38 acres of huckleberry fields for tribal gathering in the Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest.

We would like to introduce you to two Forest Service employees in the Eastern Region. Doug Thompson recently accepted the position of Tribal Relations Specialist on the Chippewa National Forest. If you haven't already, please welcome Doug. Adrian Ackley, a member of the Lac du Flambeau Band of Lake Superior Chippewa Indians, just completed a detail on the Chequamegon-Nicolet, Ottawa and Hiawatha National Forests.

In a closing article just before a regional round robin, Kaitlyn Stevens, an Alaska Native youth, describes her participation in the Resource Assistants Program.

It is our pleasure to provide to you stories that serve as small samples of the great work going on between the Forest Service and Tribes. We look forward to continuously moving toward outcomes that benefit the Agency and American Indian and Alaska Native communities across the Nation. At the heart of our work, we continue to Support Sovereignty Through Shared Stewardship.

## **Tongass National Forest Celebrates Elizabeth Peratrovich and Alaska Natives' Civil Rights**

### **Carla Casulucan, Tribal Relations Specialist, Tongass National Forest**

In the waning days of the Second World War, a Tlingit woman stood up in front of the Alaska Territorial Senate to demand equality for all Alaskans — and her voice reverberated far beyond the Last Frontier.

*"I would not have expected that I, who am 'barely out of savagery', would have to remind gentlemen 'with five-thousand years of recorded civilization behind them' of our Bill of Rights."*

*~ Elizabeth Peratrovich*

The little-known story of Elizabeth *Kaaxgal.aat* Peratrovich and her fight against racism in Alaska will now be shared with many of the million-plus visitors who arrive in Ketchikan each summer. On February 16, 2017, the Tongass National Forest's Southeast Alaska Discovery Center dedicated the Elizabeth Peratrovich Theater and unveiled a new permanent exhibit on Alaska Natives' fight for civil rights during a joint ceremony with the Alaska Native Brotherhood (ANB) and Alaska Native Sisterhood (ANS). Formed in 1912 and 1915 respectively, the ANB and ANS are the oldest known indigenous persons' civil rights organizations in the world and where Elizabeth and her husband Roy, Grand Presidents of the ANS and ANB, began their path to victory against discrimination on behalf of all Alaskans.

Tlingit writer, University of Alaska Fairbanks professor and actress Diane Benson keynoted the ceremony by declaring it fitting that Elizabeth's life and work be honored in a museum dedicated to telling the story of Southeast Alaska's land and people.

"The pain of racism has left marks on my heart and on my face. Just walking through this building tonight is healing," said Benson, who portrayed Peratrovich in the 2009 PBS documentary titled *For the Rights of*

*All: Ending Jim Crow in Alaska.* “I hear the voices of our people, I hear our language spoken when just in my lifetime it was not allowed. Elizabeth spoke up for our rights at a time when we couldn’t walk down the street without facing insult and abuse.”

*“No law will eliminate crimes but, at least you as legislators, can assert to the world that you recognize the evil of the present situation and speak your intent to help us overcome discrimination.”*

~ Elizabeth Peratrovich

Elizabeth Peratrovich grew up in Southeast Alaska and graduated from Ketchikan High School, where she met her future husband Roy. Their passionate advocacy and tireless organizing with the ANS and ANB are credited with securing enactment of the Alaska Anti-Discrimination Act on February 16, 1945. By barring racial discrimination in public facilities and accommodations, the fledgling Territory of Alaska took action to prohibit segregation nearly two decades before the federal Civil Rights Act was passed. Each year, Alaskans honor Elizabeth’s memory and her work on the anniversary of the law’s enactment, now celebrated by State Proclamation as *Elizabeth Peratrovich Day*.

Those celebrations are what led Leslie Swada, Director of the Southeast Alaska Discovery Center, to think big. For more than a decade, the ANB and ANS have partnered with the Forest Service to honor Elizabeth Peratrovich Day through art, lectures, speeches, dances and traditional ceremonies in the center’s 210-seat theater. What if, Swada thought, the center didn’t just celebrate Elizabeth once a year, but all year round?

“I was inspired to find a way to tell Elizabeth’s story, because it’s a story that needs to be told—to Alaskans, to (the rest of the country) and to people around the world,” said Swada. “Hers is a message of courage, of defiance and of hope.”

**Elizabeth *Kaaxgal.aat* Peratrovich (1911-1958); Tlingit, *Lukaax.ádi* (Raven-Sockeye). Photo courtesy of Southeast Alaska Discovery Center.**



Swada reached out to Carla Casulucan, Tribal Relations Specialist for the Tongass National Forest. Working through the Forest Service Tribal Relations program helped ensure Swada was proceeding in a culturally appropriate manner by observing and following traditional Tlingit protocols, as well as the protocols of the ANB/ANS. Casulucan knew first and foremost that permission had to be sought from Elizabeth’s immediate family. She went to work researching and tracking down Roy Peratrovich, Jr., Elizabeth’s last surviving child. After receiving Roy Jr’s blessing, she knew the next place to seek support would be from the ANB/ANS Grand Camp. Casulucan presented at the annual ANB and ANS Grand Camp Convention held in Juneau in early October 2016, where she received unanimous support from each of the approximately 20 ANB/ANS Camps in attendance. Later, while attending the Alaska Federation of Natives Convention in Fairbanks in late October 2016, Casulucan was able to discuss the project with

Diane Benson, who agreed to be a speaker for the dedication ceremony. Further collaboration with the Peratrovich family, the ANB and ANS, the Sealaska Heritage Institute, the Alaska State Museum and other local organizations helped the Southeast Discovery Center to produce a two-part display that is now part of the Center's permanent exhibition. It includes archival photographs, artifacts and information telling Elizabeth's story, including her yearbook photo from Ketchikan High School. It was unveiled by Elizabeth's granddaughter Betsy Peratrovich and Jason Anderson, Deputy Forest Supervisor of the Tongass National Forest.

**Unveiling ceremony at the Alaska State Museum. From left: Jason Anderson, Deputy Forest Supervisor, Tongass NF; Hon. David Landis, Mayor Ketchikan Gateway Borough; Hon. Cecelia Tavoliero, President, Alaska Native Sisterhood Grand Camp; Carla Casulucan, Tribal Relations Specialist, Tongass NF; Leslie Swada, Director, Southeast Discovery Center; Hon. Sasha Soboleff, President, Alaska Native Brotherhood; Betsy Peratrovich, Elizabeth's granddaughter; Diane Benson, Assistant Professor in the Department of , Alaska Native Studies and Rural Development, University of Alaska Fairbanks, Native leader, actress. Photo provided by Forest Service employee Carla Casulucan.**



After the unveiling, Benson performed a dramatization of Peratrovich's famed speech to the Alaska Territorial Senate. The ceremony also included remarks from ANB Grand Camp President Sasha Soboleff, ANS Grand Camp President Cecelia Tavoliero and Ketchikan Gateway Borough Mayor David Landis. The ceremony concluded with traditional song and dance by three local Alaska Native groups representing each of the three indigenous Alaska Native Nations in Southeast Alaska: Tlingit, Haida and Tsimshian.

While praising the Forest Service and its partners for honoring her grandmother, Betsy called upon the community to continue making strides toward inclusivity and respect for all, carrying on Elizabeth's struggle for equality.

"It's up to us, each and every day, to make sure her legacy continues," said Betsy. "We must continue to call out bigotry in all its forms."



## Apache Heritage Lives On in the Dragoon Mountains

### Angela Aleiss, U.S. Forest Service Volunteer

More than a 150 years ago, the Chiricahua Apache lived among the Dragoon Mountains in southeastern Arizona. For a while, the Apache leader Cochise and the Chiricahua ruled these lands, where no one could pass through without Cochise's permission.

Cochise died in 1874, and he is believed to be buried somewhere among the Dragoon's tall rocky crevices. From 1872 to 1876, the Dragoons were part of the Chiricahua Indian Reservation—until the government abolished it and relocated the Chiricahua north to the San Carlos Apache Reservation. But while the Chiricahua have long departed these rugged lands, today the Forest Service is working to preserve their ancestral legacy.

The Dragoons are one of the "sky island" mountain ranges in the Coronado National Forest. Located in the Douglas Ranger District, the Dragoons stretch 25 miles along a south-southeastern axis, and the highest point, Mt. Glenn, rises to a height of 7,519 feet above sea level. These mountains are a maze of towering granite spires and gnarling crevices with large course-grained boulders jutting upward among a mixture of pinyon, oak, velvet mesquite, juniper and cypress. Low-branching shrubs such as rabbit brush and various species of yucca line the canyon floors.

With its abundant vegetation and towering rocks, the Dragoons once served as a fortress where Cochise and his warriors could peer unnoticed at approaching enemies far below.

**The East Stronghold lies on the eastern side of the Dragoon Mountains. At 5,000 feet, lush vegetation commingles with the rocky terrain. The Forest Service campground and two rental cabins are near the area. Photo credit to Forest Service volunteer Angela Aleiss.**



The woodland area known as the East Stronghold stretches across the center of the Dragoon Mountains. The Forest Service provides a campground here along with two rental cabins for public use—Half Moon Ranch and the Shaw House. In 1986, the Fort Sill Apache Tribe acquired four acres of trust land in this area.

These scenic mountains had served as a location for Turner Pictures' 1993 television movie *Geronimo*, starring Joseph Runningfox as Geronimo and August Schellenberg as Cochise.

In 2007, the Mescalero Apache Tribe held a Blessing Feast in the East Stronghold to honor the land's sacred heritage. The four-day event featured tribal members sharing food along with a blessing by the *Gáhe* (Apache Crown Dancers). Through the Forest Service, the Tribe was able to harvest traditional plants for ceremonial use like banana-shaped fruit of the *Yucca baccata* (banana yucca) and the roasted hearts of the *Dasyilirion wheeleri* (sotol).

Cordell Balatche of the Mescalero Apache Tribe remembers the feast well. Balatche, 70, had never visited the Dragoons but somehow felt that he had been there before. "It's very important that we should have another [feast] there in the future," Balatche said. "I love that country. It seems like I just came home."

Home to the Apache also includes the western side of the Dragoons with its enormous granite boulders of Council Rocks. In 1872, General Oliver Otis Howard met Cochise at the slopes of Council Rocks and agreed to a peace treaty that would set aside a reservation for the Chiricahua. Faded pictographs and ancient mortars dot the large rocks.



**The western side of the Dragoon Mountains lies in a rain shadow with drier vegetation than the East Stronghold. Council Rocks are among its massive granite boulders. Photo credit to Forest Service volunteer Angela Aleiss.**

Forest Service staff receive training to help them identify and protect sites of importance to Native Americans, including archaeological resources like the pictographs and mortars at Council Rocks, which they regularly inspect. For example, Dave Mehalic, Archaeologist on the Coronado National Forest,



shares his knowledge of the lithic technology developed by Native cultures, demonstrating flint knapping techniques used to make stone tools—for example, chipping rocks to make arrowheads. "By watching how stone tools are made, our staff can see stone tool debris. That debris is the main component of how we identify stone tool productions," he said.



**Ancestral Native American pictographs appear on the western side of the Dragoon Mountains. Photo credit to Forest Service volunteer Angela Aleiss.**

Forest Service staff must work closely with their tribal counterparts to identify and protect cultural sites and natural resources of religious or cultural significance to Native Americans. Mark Altaha, Tribal Historic Preservation Officer for the White Mountain Apache, advises federal agencies to continue to partner with Tribes to protect the Dragoon's many cultural sites. As Altaha points out, "There are some places that are still utilized to date for ceremonial purposes. And since Apache archaeology is elusive and difficult to identify, we feel it is best to share what we know of Apache archaeology with the various federal agencies who manage these lands."

**Bedrock mortars in the Dragoon Mountains were once used by Native Americans to grind grains, acorns, and other food sources. Photo credit to Forest Service volunteer Angela Aleiss.**





## **Hopi Tribe/Tonto National Forest Springs Restoration Project**

### **Nanebah Nez, Tribal Relations Program Manager, Tonto National Forest**

Last October, the Forest Service hosted a week-long camping trip for eight youth from the Hopi Tribe. Forest Service staff from the Tonto and Kaibab National Forests tent-camped in Payson with Hopi youth and tribal elders. We spent every day on the Forest sharing stories and assisting with forest restoration activities. On day one of the trip, Hopi elder Floyd Lomakuyvaya shared that he wasn't just there to teach youth, "I am always hungry for knowledge, and sometimes young people are the best teachers. Each of us as human beings has something to learn and something to contribute." As the days turned into a week, I was able to appreciate this sentiment more and more as I watched the youth engage whole-heartedly with each activity. Their excitement and sense of wonder bred appreciation for how honored I am to have access to and responsibility for some of the most beautiful places on earth.



**Crew for the Hopi Tribe/Tonto National Forest Springs Restoration Project. Photo credit to Forest Service employee Alison Mettler.**

**The crew takes a break to talk to Payson District Ranger Debbie Cress. Photo credit to Forest Service employee Alison Mettler.**

Payson District Ranger Cress rolled up her sleeves to work alongside the youth. She also discussed why they might want to consider a career in natural resource management.

The Forest Service partnered with the Hopi Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act program, Hopi Cultural Preservation Office and the Hopi Cultural Resource Advisory Task Team to conduct key restoration actions on the Tonto National Forest. The goal of the Hopi Tribe/Tonto National Forest Springs Restoration Project was to provide a setting for the sharing of traditional ecological knowledge between tribal elders, tribal youth and Forest Service staff.







**Melvina Johnson, Hopi WIOA Case Manager, is seen here releasing an endangered Chiricahua leopard frog on the Tonto National Forest hatched and raised at the Phoenix Zoo. Photo credit to Forest Service employee Alison Mettler.**

As part of the Association of Zoos and Aquariums, and in cooperation with Arizona Game and Fish Department (AGFD) and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the Forest Service has partnered with the Phoenix Zoo to save and protect the Chiricahua leopard frog.

**Staff from the Oak Creek Watershed Council and the Forest Service hike with the youth into Fossil Creek for a day of trash removal. Photo credit to Forest Service employee Alison Mettler.**

Following a hike into the Fossil Creek Canyon where the youth spent a day removing trash, elders Wally Davis, Jr., Tonto Apache, and Vincent Randall, Yavapai-Apache Nation, joined everyone in the canyon for lunch and traditional story-telling. Fossil Creek is a Traditional Cultural Property to the *Dilzhe'e* people (Apache clan members), and they hold generations of traditional ecological knowledge about this important place.



The Hopi consider natural springs to be traditional cultural properties. 'Water is Life,' for the Hopi people, who live in an arid environment and have much knowledge to share about water protection and preservation.

**Staff from the Hopi Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act program, members of the Hopi Cultural Resource Advisory Task Team and Hopi youth enjoyed the day hiking to visit Pieper Spring. Photo credit to Forest Service employee Alison Mettler.**







**Tribal youth and Forest Service staff remove brush from the Shoofly Archaeological Site. Photo credit to Forest Service employee Alison Mettler.**

The Hopi Tribe considers archaeological artifacts and features to be the footprints of their ancestors. Material evidence of human occupation serve to remind the Hopi people of the existence and migration path of ancestors. Hopi elders pilgrimage far and wide each year to places like Shoofly Ruin to place spiritual offerings. Shoofly Archaeological Ruin has specific management protocols that call for the hand-cutting and hand-removal of trees and brush in order to prevent unnecessary damage to archaeological features. Youth assisted Forest Service staff in cutting and carrying tree and brush limbs for removal.

**Max Taylor from the Hopi Water Resources Program demonstrates the importance of watershed restoration to youth by fashioning a makeshift drainage system. Photo credit to Forest Service employee Alison Mettler.**

**Betty Poley from the Hopi Land Information Systems Program teaches students how to use a Trimble GPS to map the land. Career opportunities in geography and geospatial information systems were discussed at length. Photo credit to Forest Service employee Alison Mettler.**



On the final day of the trip, over breakfast and sitting around the fire, the group had time to reflect on the week's activities.

Josette Yellowhorse, a bright and smiling young woman shared her thoughts, "I'm really glad I decided to come this week. I could have just been sitting at home doing nothing. I'm really amazed at these places that are down here; Fossil Creek and Pieper Spring. These are beautiful places. Sacred places to the Yavapai



Apache and the Tonto Apache, and according to my elders, sacred to us, the Hopi people. It was really amazing to have so many people come out to pay attention to us. All sorts of people from our Tribe and from the Forest Service to encourage us that there are jobs out there waiting for us, to tell us that we are special and important. I hope my little brothers and sisters get to experience this same program. I'll never forget it."

Everett F. Gomez, Case Manager for the Hopi Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act responded in kind to the youth, "I'm really proud of each and every one of you. The way you carry yourselves. The way you listen. The appreciation you've shown to the people who've come out to spend time with you. You represented our Hopi youth well."

Floyd Lomakayuaya, Hopi Elder, also had some closing words, "Our people don't take anything for granted, the water, frogs, the trees that are providing shade, the air that we are breathing, the earth we are standing on. What we did here this week was significant."

The Hopi Tribe/Tonto National Forest Springs Restoration Project was conceived as a continuation of the on-going partnership between the Forest Service and the Hopi Tribe. Tribal programs are increasingly interested in partnering with the Forest Service, especially in collaborative projects focused on landscape restoration activities around springs and traditional cultural properties. Partnerships such as this not only provide a mutual benefit to tribes and our agency, they are immensely beneficial to youth and the future of our precious natural resources.

*Special thanks goes to Everett Gomez, Joel Nicholas, Mike Lyndon, Chris Welker and Christina Akins, without whom this trip would not have been possible.*

## Walatowa Timber Industries Constructs New Pellet Mill

### Reuben Montes, Tribal Relations Specialist, Santa Fe National Forest

Forestry Program Manager Jeanne Dawson and I recently toured the new building constructed to house Walatowa Timber Industries' new pellet mill. Walatowa Timbers Industries is a joint venture between the Pueblo of Jemez and TC Company. Since 2012, the partnership has employed tribal members and increased production capacity. Walatowa has also played a key role in the Southwest Jemez Mountains Restoration project. The review team was so impressed during the Chief's Review of Region 3 in February 2016 that they secured \$250,000 for the Pueblo of Jemez to construct the new building and pellet mill, allowing Walatowa's entry into the burgeoning wood pellet industry. On December 20, 2016, in one of her last official acts, former Forest Supervisor Maria T. Garcia and former Jemez Pueblo Governor David Yepa signed a renewed Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) designed to further enhance and strengthen the valuable working relationship the Forest has built with the Pueblo of Jemez.

**New pellet mill at Walatowa Timber Industries. Photo credit to Forest Service employee Reuben Montes.**



## **Trail of Tears Research and Tributes Win Awards at 2017 To Bridge a Gap Meeting**

**Mary McCorvie, Heritage Program Manager, Shawnee National Forest**

The Shawnee National Forest and its partner, the Southern Illinois University Center for Archaeological Investigations, took top honors at 2017 To Bridge a Gap, the annual meeting that helps strengthen government-to-government relationships between the Forest Service and federally-recognized tribal governments. The University's Ayla Amadio won first prize for a poster illustrating GIS research on the Trail of Tears in the Mark Twain and Shawnee National Forests.

The Shawnee National Forest received second place for a poster highlighting its overnight environmental education camp that brings native children from removed tribes back to ancestral homelands to learn about its resources, landscape and career opportunities. The Forest was also recognized with an honorable mention for a poster on the Shawnee Conservation Corps, a resident Tribal Youth Conservation Corps. These programs are highlighted in the next article. These and other projects involving fire and aviation workforce diversity will welcome even more tribes to the Forest.

Two quilts that raise awareness about the Trail of Tears National Historic Trail in Illinois also won awards at the 2017 To Bridge a Gap meeting. The quilts, which were made by volunteers of the Shawnee National Forest, portray the harsh conditions faced by more than 11,000 Cherokee as they passed through southern Illinois in the dead of winter during their forced removal in 1838 and 1839.

The quilts are part of a volunteer program known as Passport in Time. Volunteers transform local historical events and landscapes in southern Illinois into works of art by using the concept and methods of community quilting. Through Passport in Time a group of volunteers come together over the course of a week and both design and create breathtaking pieces of art using fabric, needle and thread! The quilts are as beautiful as the spirit of the people they represent.



**Quilts made by volunteers of the Shawnee National Forest depict harsh conditions on the Trail of Tears. Photo credit to Forest Service employee Mary McCorvie.**



## Two Shawnee National Forest Programs Connect Removed Tribes to the Eastern Woodlands

**Mary McCorvie, Heritage Program Manager, Shawnee National Forest**

**Kelly Pearson, Youth, Hosted and Volunteer Coordinator, Shawnee National Forest**

This summer the Shawnee National Forest hosted youth from federally-recognized Tribes for the third consecutive year. Twelve youth from two Tribes—the Eastern Shawnee Tribe of Oklahoma and the Shawnee Tribe—explored the Shawnee National Forest and learned about the ecology and history of the Eastern Woodlands through the week-long *More Kids in the Woods* program. This program was supported by a grant from the Eastern Region and through partnerships with the Southern Illinois University Center for Archaeological Investigations and Touch of Nature Environmental Center. Among their many activities, youth assisted with an archaeological investigation along the Trail of Tears National Historic Trail and canoed and snorkeled on the Cache River, once utilized by their Shawnee ancestors.



**Campers learning about native fish and their habitat with a fish seine in Big Creek, in the very southeastern part of Illinois. Photo credit to Forest Service employee Sue Hirsch.**



**Mykal Brisbois of the Shawnee Tribe checking out a tiny water snake recovered in the fish seine. Photo credit to Forest Service employee Sue Hirsch.**

This summer also marked the first year for the Shawnee Conservation Corps (SCC)—nine tribal youth from the Eastern Shawnee Tribe of Oklahoma and the United Keetoowah Band of Cherokee Indians in Oklahoma assisted with the management of natural and cultural resources on the Shawnee National Forest, all while learning about the past, conservation, community and themselves. The SCC youth built and maintained trails across the Forest, including the Trail of Tears National Historic Trail, assisted with archaeological investigations and the preservation of historic structures, maintained pollinator gardens while learning about invasive plant species, and removed trash and abandoned camping equipment from wilderness areas. Many of the members of the 2017 SCC look forward to returning next summer, and Mary McCorvie, the program leader, will look to these youth to mentor their peers as the Shawnee National Forest expands the program, “These are the tribal leaders of tomorrow. It is vital that they understand not only the connection between the tribes and land, but also how to care for the land and all its resources. Southern Illinois has so much to offer in teaching them these lessons.”

**Shawnee Conservation Corps member Daryn Smith (United Keetoowah Band of Cherokee Indians in Oklahoma) learning how to measure the DBH (diameter at breast height) of a tree, which can be used for a wide variety of calculations, including estimating the volume, biomass and carbon storage of trees. Photo credit to Forest Service employee Elizabeth Kuplent.**



## **Enhancing Huckleberry Fields on the Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest for Tribal Gathering**

**Jesse Plumage, Forest Wildlife Program Manager, Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest**

The Swinomish Tribal Community and Sauk-Suiattle Indian Tribe partnered with the U.S. Forest Service to enhance 38 acres of huckleberry fields for tribal gathering in the Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest.

Huckleberries are valued by western Washington Tribes as a subsistence ceremonial and cultural resource, and most recently, as a traditional food that is believed to aid in the prevention of adult onset diabetes.

Wild mountain huckleberries are sacred to northwest tribes, but traditional gathering areas have suffered from generations of fire suppression and forest management activities favoring old growth forests that don't support mountain huckleberry species.

**Meadow and Huckleberry Enhancement project, Iron Mountain site. Photo credit to Forest Service employee Shauna Hee.**



This huckleberry enhancement project was developed and made possible through regional challenge cost share funds. The purpose of the project was to remove competing vegetation (trees) from around Big-leaf huckleberry so as to promote greater berry production. Project design was informed by the previous Segelson Ridge Huckleberry Enhancement CCS Project whose monitoring results indicate treatments have been effective in increasing huckleberry production.

Forest Service personnel worked together to identify ecological treatment criteria: areas that had a high diversity but low abundance of flowering species, LSR allocation, occurred in the upper montane zone, and had a moderate to gentle slope. In the areas identified, it was observed that meadows were typically dominated by huckleberry species with a fireweed association, and were visited by a diversity and abundance of pollinators during the flowering season. The tribes identified project sites that met the ecological criteria, and were also historic huckleberry collection sites identified by tribal elders.

This project also enhances terrestrial habitat for various wildlife species including bears, coyotes, chipmunks, ground squirrels, grouse and other birds. For example, huckleberry enhances food sources for pollinators such as butterflies and Western bumblebee (R6 Sensitive); bears utilize all huckleberry parts (berries, stems, leaves and roots); elk and deer feed on young leaves, and the berries provide an important food source for ruffed grouse. Huckleberry shrubs also provide hiding and resting cover for many smaller birds and mammals.



## Getting to Know Doug Thompson

Doug Thompson is the Chippewa National Forest's new Tribal Relations Specialist. Prior to joining the Forest Service, Doug worked as a consultant and attorney focused on resolving complex land restoration, natural resource management and environmental matters in Indian Country. He has more than 20 years of experience representing clients and helping conservation interests implement natural resource projects throughout the Great Lakes region. Much of this time he was a conservation program director for The Nature Conservancy. Prior to working for the Conservancy, Doug worked in the private sector as an attorney in New York and the lower Midwest, with a focus on environmental law.

Doug began working with tribes in northern Minnesota in 2008 when he served on Minnesota's Moose Advisory Committee. Shortly thereafter, he worked with a host of organizations and natural resource

management staff from the 1854 Treaty Authority and the Fond du Lac and Grand Portage Bands of Lake Superior Chippewa to form the Minnesota Moose Habitat Collaborative. These experiences led him to take a one-year leave of absence from his position with the Conservancy, and in 2011, he earned a Master of Laws in Indigenous Peoples Law and Policy from the University of Arizona's College of Law where he focused on tribal resource management issues.

In 2014, Doug left The Nature Conservancy and worked with tribal interests full-time. In addition to his legal practice, he has served as a correspondent for tribal media outlets, where he covers tribal natural resource management activities and environmental issues affecting Indian Country. Doug currently lives in Duluth, Minnesota. Please join us in welcoming Doug!

**Doug Thompson, Chippewa National Forest Tribal Relations Specialist.**  
**Photo courtesy of Forest Service employee Doug Thompson.**



## Getting to Know Adrian Ackley

Adrian Ackley recently detailed as the Tribal Liaison Officer, vice Mary Rasmussen, for the Chequamegon-Nicolet, Ottawa and Hiawatha National Forests. Adrian comes from a forestry background, currently serving as the Presale Forester for the Lakewood-Laona Ranger District on the Chequamegon-Nicolet, where he started in 2013. Before that, Adrian served as the Forester for the Southern California Agency, Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA). Adrian attended the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point before beginning to fulfill his obligations as a SCEP student at the BIA. As a member of the Lac du Flambeau Band of Lake Superior Chippewa Indians, Adrian has a lot of experience with local tribal issues such as off-reservation treaty rights, and he has a strong personal dedication to serving Indian Country.

**Adrian Ackley, Lakewood-Laona Ranger District Forester on the Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest.** Photo courtesy of Forest Service employee Adrian Ackley.



## **Reflections on the Resource Assistants Program**

### **Kaitlyn Stevens, Resource Assistant, R10, Office of the Regional Forester**

Coming into this internship, I wasn't too sure what to expect, as I didn't know a lot about the Forest Service. In my nearly seven months with the Forest Service, I have participated in numerous meetings—at the R10 Regional Office, various other locations in Juneau, and afar. Here in Juneau I have helped plan and develop a Discovery Agents Mission, which I highlight below. I also helped plan a totem pole raising ceremony that I hope is going to take place this summer, and I even traveled out of town and out of state to mingle with other Forest Service employees and the general Alaskan public.

The Alaska State Museum has teamed up with Discovery Agents and the Forest Service to create a Mission at the Andrew P. Kashevaroff State Library, Archives and Museum, or SLAM, which is the new museum building in Juneau that opened in 2016. The Windows to Alaska's Past at the Alaska State Museum Mission Site is like a scavenger hunt that takes place digitally via a smartphone application developed specifically for the purpose of digital scavenger hunts. Players collect "virtual USBees" hidden throughout the museum's exhibits while learning about Alaska's history and cultures. Both at the planning meetings and the walkthrough of the Mission Site, I was invited to offer up advice on putting together the scavenger hunt. I even helped decide which exhibits would hide the virtual USBees!

I have traveled away from Juneau as part of my internship twice since startup. On one occasion I went to Fairbanks to attend part of the 2016 Alaska Federation of Natives (AFN) Convention. Booths at the convention were set up so we could learn about what is going on all around Alaska, and there was a health fair so that we could learn more about how to keep our bodies healthy. The night that I arrived, I got to attend the Southeast Caucus. There were a few different organizations that showed up from around Alaska, among them the Tlingit and Haida and SEALASKA. Senator Lisa Murkowski, Governor Bill Walker, and Lieutenant Governor Byron Mallot took part along with the organizations. Live debates took place throughout the day, as well as performances by different dance groups from around the state. I have been to AFN in years previous, and I always admired how the state came together to celebrate the native culture and the different people who showed up to support the event.

Another place that I traveled was Montana. I accompanied the three other Forest Service Tribal Relations staff members from the Alaska Region to meet with our Tribal Relations counterparts from different Forest Service units throughout the country. I was able to visit the Salish-Kootenai Dam, which is the first tribally-owned hydroelectric dam in the U.S. It was a really wonderful experience, and it is something that will stand out in my mind about that trip. It was really inspiring to see the innovative steps that the Native Americans are taking there in Montana. After the trip to the dam, we were invited to sit in on part of a Tribal Council meeting. That was something else I believe I haven't ever done, and it was interesting to see how the Tribe organized the meeting.

*Kaitlyn is a Tlingit youth from the community of Klukwan, and she participated in the Resource Assistants Program during the fall and winter of 2016-2017. Region 10 was thrilled to have Kaitlyn intern with us and wish her all the best! Gunalchéesh!*



## Safety Corner



[Learn more about how to protect your eyes and stay safe outdoors!](#) The eclipse can be experienced safely, but it is vital that eyes are protected at all times with the proper solar glasses and viewers. Check out the [NASA safety tips for watching the eclipse](#).

## Regional Round Robin

April 18-21, 2017, staff from Tribal Relations and the Heritage Program met in Washington, D.C. for a joint workshop—the first time in more than 12 years as an entire group. The workshop encouraged strategic discussions of current critical work, relevant issues, visioning and planning for the future to improve relations and partnership opportunities between our programs and with Indian tribes and tribal organizations. Meeting in Washington, D.C. provided regional staff the opportunity to meet with Directors and Deputy Directors/ Assistant Directors responsible for implementing the Chief’s priorities for landscape restoration and cross-boundary partnerships.

Participants had many open and facilitated discussions of how to better work with each other and leverage resources across business areas, increase efficiencies and improve consistency and coordination among Tribal Relations and the Heritage Program in support of the Forest Service mission. Attendees were provided time to share his or her unique subject matter expertise and experience with regard to sacred sites, historic properties, repatriations, reburials, heritage tourism, tribal treaty rights and tribal consultation in the context of forest management, research and collaborative.

The workshop devoted time to several working groups that would continue the ideas and plans generated during the workshop into the future, as well as produce products to benefit both the Tribal Relations and Heritage programs.

**U.S. Forest Service Tribal Relations and Heritage Program staff. Photo courtesy of Forest Service employee Jen Youngblood.**



### Eastern Region

On May 4, 2017, Marla Collins, Tribal Relations Specialist for the Mark Twain National Forest, presented to 26 attendees of the 2017 Region PAL-LSC meeting at the Shawnee National Forest. Her presentation focused on Tribal Relations, NEPA and tribal etiquette, and was delivered to provide regional NEPA practitioners with an enhanced knowledge of tribal relations.

Attendees stated they appreciated the etiquette portion and notion that they may be able to do some tribal coordination outside of official consultation. Kudos to Marla and of course, a big THANK YOU from the Regional PAL-LSC Group.

**U.S. Forest Service Tribal Relations Specialist Marla Collins presents at the 2017 PAL-LSC meeting. Photo courtesy of Forest Service employee Jen Youngblood.**

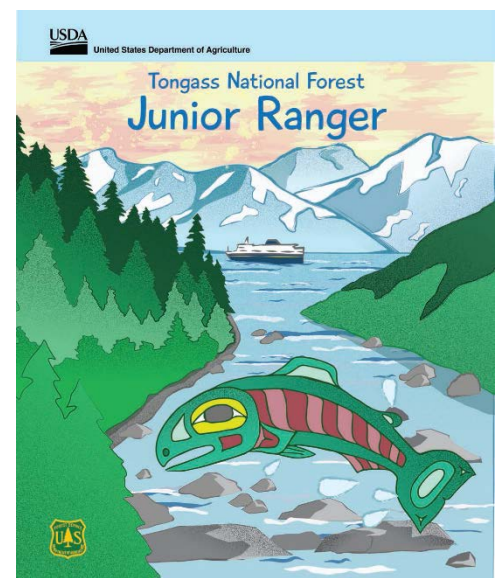


### Southwest Region

In collaboration with the Kaibab Band of Paiute Indians, the Kaibab National Forest recently produced the video “Snake Gulch, A Passage Through Time,” which can be viewed on [YouTube](#). Through this video, the significance of the cultural landscape in the Kanab Creek Wilderness is shared, and the importance of the management of cultural resources on public lands is highlighted.

### Alaska Region

The Tongass National Forest has printed and distributed the newest version of the [Tongass NF Junior Ranger Book](#). Tongass National Forest Tribal Relations Specialist Carla Casulucan played a part in ensuring more in-depth and richer cultural components were present throughout the book, including native language and place names, a story from an elder and Alaska Native student artwork. The books can be downloaded, and they are available at Ranger Districts throughout the Tongass!





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On behalf of the Office of Tribal Relations, I would like to express our gratitude for the valuable contributions of all our Forest Service staff and partners who work tirelessly to make a difference.

Please contact Rebecca Hill at (202) 815-4585, or by email at [rebeccahill@fs.fed.us](mailto:rebeccahill@fs.fed.us), with any comments or suggestions as we revamp the Office of Tribal Relations website and modernize the delivery of your accomplishments and our mission. Thank you.