



OFFICE OF TRIBAL
RELATIONS
U.S. FOREST SERVICE
TRIBAL RELATIONS PROGRAM

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Tribal Relations News

Director’s Welcome

Welcome to the winter 2018 [USDA Forest Service](#) Tribal Relations Newsletter. We have a wonderful lineup of articles from across the country for you to enjoy – and be inspired by. I am certainly inspired by the feature articles in this edition. I am also inspired by the diversity of the authors. None of them are Forest Service tribal relations personnel. Rather, these authors offer stories and perspectives as “regular” Forest Service staff, members of the private sector, volunteers, and retirees. But the Forest Service mission is there, every step of the way, as you will see from the diversity of topics and geographies. And, as shown in the Opportunity Corner and the Recent Publications section, Forest Service Research & Development and the National Forest System have been busy with outreach for members to the Forestry Research Advisory Council and publishing great new works in the *Journal of Forestry*. As you can tell, it is the great employees from across the Forest Service and our wonderful partners who do the tribal relations work, not just those of us with a tribal relations job title!

Don’t forget to check out the [U.S. Forest Service Office of Tribal Relations](#) website (<https://www.fs.fed.us/spf/tribalrelations/>) where you can also find announcements, blogs, older editions of the Newsletter, and tons of resources. We look forward to telling the Forest Service tribal relations story through the web format we proposed last summer once our website updates are complete.

In the meantime, we continue this edition with an article submitted by Forest Service volunteer Angela Aleiss that relates how the Forest Service is working to protect the treaty rights of the Tulalip Tribes through co-stewardship of resources important to the Tulalip within the geographic boundaries of the Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest in the Pacific Northwest.

Bobby Gonzales of Tribal Energy Resource, LLC, expands on the how Forest Service policy “to establish and maintain effective relationships with tribes with respect to cultural resources” is implemented on the Ozark-St. Francis National Forest in the Southern Region.

Moving to the Southwest, Marshall Masayesva of the Southwest Conservation Corps Ancestral Lands program highlights the first ever partnership between the Forest Service and Ancestral Lands Hopi where, on the Tonto National Forest, crew members repaired sections of the Arizona National Scenic Trail. Ancestral Lands Hopi also partnered with the Four Forest Restoration Initiative and the Kaibab National Forest to restore Elk Springs.



Swadaʔx̣ or Mountain Huckleberry (*Vaccinium membranaceum*).
Photo credit to Libby Nelson, Senior Environmental Policy Analyst,
Tulalip Tribes Natural Resources Department.

“We need to clear the trees when they’re relatively young,” said Russell Moses, Forester with the Tulalip Tribes Natural Resources Department. “We leave a tree about every 20 to 30 feet. The places we started clearing initially had 700 to 800 trees, a foot and a half to 14 feet,” he added. But there are also false huckleberries, which grow in clumps and have no fruiting body. “They just take up a lot of ground on the land,” Moses explained.

Inez Bill, Tulalip Tribes Rediscovery Program Coordinator, explained that the 10-year co-stewardship plan is not only important in the continuing struggle to uphold treaty rights; it also helps keep people involved in taking care of resources for future generations. “This work at swadaʔx̣ali is an expression of Tulalip’s sovereignty regarding our foods, and our commitment to support the dietary needs and the lifeways of our people,” she said.

“This work at swadaʔx̣ali is an expression of Tulalip’s sovereignty regarding our foods, and our commitment to support the dietary needs and the lifeways of our people.” – Inez Bill

Tribes and the U.S. Forest Service: Walking in both worlds

Bobby Gonzales, Tribal Energy Resource, LLC

The Forest Service has a legal obligation to engage with Native American tribes. Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) mandates that federal agencies “...consult with any Indian tribe that attaches religious and cultural significance to historic properties that may be affected by the agency’s undertakings”. The Forest Service policy is to establish and maintain effective relationships with tribes with respect to cultural resources.

The key to effective tribal engagement between the Forest Service and Native American tribes is to manage tribal interests while improving the stewardship of national forests. For the Forest Service or any federal agency, improving trust and collaboration with Native American tribes can be a daunting task. In order to meet that challenge head-on, the Ozark-St. Francis National Forest developed a Programmatic Agreement (PA) to simultaneously facilitate their management of heritage resources and engage tribal

governments. Provisions in the NHPA allow federal agencies to use a PA to formalize and facilitate the tribal consultation process.

As part of the PA, the Forest provided a cultural resource training and certification program to several Native American tribes of the region. The Forest trained “tribal heritage technicians” to participate on archaeological crews performing archaeological field survey work required for Forest Service projects. By training tribal heritage technicians, the Forest began developing long-term, meaningful relationships with those tribes. Tribes have a wealth of traditional environmental knowledge which has been passed down through generations. The Forest has increasingly recognized the unique value of this knowledge, as some tribes are not opposed to forest management (tree harvesting, etc.), and many of them are highly effective forest managers providing thousands of jobs to tribal members.

The Ozark-St. Francis National Forest’s approach to tribal engagement is founded on our values and the principle of developing and maintaining collaborative, long-standing relationships. The Forest Service’s relationship building with Native American tribes is based on trust and respect and applying a flexible approach which respects the diversity of Native American cultures, their historic relationship to the land, and their unique legal status.

Editor’s Note: “Lessons from a Programmatic Agreement and Heritage-Based Consultations between Tribes and the National Forests of Arkansas and Oklahoma” recently published in the *Journal of Forestry* is available [online](#).

U.S. Forest Service and Ancestral Lands Hopi Tackle the Highline Trail of the Arizona National Scenic Trail

Marshall Masayesva, Southwest Conservation Corps Ancestral Lands Hopi Program Coordinator

Ancestral Lands Hopi (AL-Hopi) is in its first year of operation, and the AL-Hopi #603 “Na’le Crew,” the first-ever summer adult crew, was fielded in partnership with the Forest Service’s Tonto National Forest,

Project Partner Paul “Pablo” Burghard, and Arizona Trails Association (ATA) representative Shawn Redfield. The Na’le Crew was specifically trained as a trail crew to tackle the Highline Trail of the Arizona National Scenic Trail in the first-ever partnership between the Forest Service and AL-Hopi.

Na’le Crew members are from the villages of Hotevilla, Oraibi, Kykotsmovi, and Sipaulovi. Photo courtesy of Southwest Conservation Corps – Ancestral Lands Program.

