

Natural Resources Conservation Service
Southeast American
Indian Work Group



Assisting Leadership in Indian Country Today

July 24, 2013

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Chapter 1

Role of NRCS in the Southeast American Indian Work Group



Our Vision

Productive Indian lands that use the effective traditional and innovative conservation techniques to sustain the natural resources.

Our Mission

To provide leadership that creates opportunities for information exchange and training between work group members, American Indians and other organizations that results in increased conservation of natural resources on American Indian Lands, increased employment of American Indians by USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and sustains the preservation of cultural resources and traditional values.



SEAIWG Members at the 2008 American Indian/ Alaska Native Employees Association conference in Spokane, WA.

Background

NRCS has over 78 years' experience in working with private landowners across the nation to provide technical and financial assistance in conserving their natural resources. As an agency, NRCS has led the way to assist Indian Tribes by establishing offices in Indian Country as defined by the U.S. Congress, the President of the United States and NRCS policies. Native American governments are sovereign nations existing within the boundaries of the United States and have special legal and political relationships with the United States. NRCS is striving to establish effective relationships with those sovereign governments by consulting with Indian Nations on a government-to-government basis and making agreements for the betterment of natural resources, economic development, health and educational needs.

The Southeast American Indian Work Group was created in 1996 to ensure the delivery of those same services to American Indians in the twelve southeast states. Originally, the members of the work group included one NRCS staff person from each state who was appointed by the NRCS State Conservationist to serve as either the state Emphasis Program Manager (EPM) or as an American Indian Liaison to one or more Tribes within the state. Leadership was provided by the Regional Conservationist, a staff person from the Regional Office and a State Conservationist who served as a "Work Group Champion." The work group continues to operate with representatives from each state, with leadership provided by the workgroup champion and guidance from the Elder Advisory Council.

The NRCS Southeast American Indian Work Group includes the following states and territory:

- | | | |
|-------------|-------------------|--------------------|
| 1) Alabama | 5) Kentucky | 9) Puerto Rico |
| 2) Arkansas | 6) Louisiana | 10) South Carolina |
| 3) Florida | 7) Mississippi | 11) Tennessee |
| 4) Georgia | 8) North Carolina | 12) Virginia |

The Southeast American Indian Work Group has developed into a strong and effective networking group who shares information, organizes regional meetings, recruits employees and provides assistance to American Indians in conservation of their natural resources.

Our Values

1. The work group will ensure that USDA program delivery is provided to all American Indians, including but not limited to, federally recognized, state recognized, community-based Tribes and individual American Indian landowners.
2. The work group will respect the cultural and traditional values of each Tribe through guidance provided by the Southeast American Indian Advisory Council.
3. The work group will strive to improve quality, accountability, effectiveness, and consistency of conservation assistance to sustain and improve Tribal natural resources.

Customers		Services		Products	
➤	Elders	➤	Leadership in Indian Country	➤	SEAIWG Plan
➤	Tribal Governments	➤	Conservation Technical Assistance	➤	Conservation Plans
➤	Tribal Members			➤	Conservation Contracts
➤	Tribal Organizations	➤	Government to Government Consultation	➤	Educational Programs
➤	USDA Agencies			➤	USDA Program Information
➤	National, Regional & State Leadership	➤	Tribal Outreach	➤	Best Management Practices
		➤	Tribal Engagement		
➤	NRCS Employees	➤	USDA Program Financial Assistance		

Value of Work Group to the Chief and Agency Leadership

- Establishes a formal network for communications between NRCS and the numerous American Indian Tribes, community based organizations and American Indian individuals.
- Provides a feedback mechanism on how well policies and requirements are being implemented.
- Improves accountability by providing information on agency performance and evaluating effectiveness and efficiency of NRCS programs, activities and operations in Indian Country.
- Increases the knowledge and skill of the staff working with the American Indians.



Dr. William Puckett, State Conservationist, Alabama speaking at the 2009 Program Delivery Meeting hosted by the Poarch Band of Creek Indians Reservation in Atmore, AL..

Chapter 2

Southeast American Indian Elders Advisory Council



Early in the process, it was realized that the work group would benefit from following an Indian tradition of seeking advice and guidance from Indian Elders. Currently, each state is invited to have an Elder representative who serves on the Southeast American Indian Advisory Council.

Appointment of an Elder is usually done in consultation between the NRCS State Conservationist and the NRCS staff person serving on the work group. The Elder is chosen due to their knowledge of American Indian affairs in that state. They may be a chief or assistant chief; however, that is not a requirement. The invitation should be discussed with the Elder first, and then formalized in a letter from the NRCS State Conservationist.

Expectations of Elders

- Knowledgeable about American Indian affairs in the appointing state.
- Provide guidance to the work group representative and the NRCS State Conservationist on NRCS programs and services and how they impact the American Indians.
- Attend some of the monthly teleconferences of the work group.
- Review material and provide input to the work group representative.
- Participate in the American Indian Program Delivery Initiative Meetings sponsored by the work group.

The Elders are an integral part of the work group and are invited to all meetings and teleconferences. They are treated with respect for their knowledge and wisdom and for the many hours that they have volunteered to assist NRCS.

Current Elders Serving On Southeast American Indian Advisory Council

Elder	Tribe	State
Mr. Billy Smith	Poarch Band of Creek Indians	Alabama
Mr. Richard Bowers	Big Cypress Seminole Tribe	Florida
Principal Chief Marian McCormick	Lower Muskogee Creek Tribe	Georgia
Vacant		Louisiana
Ms. Virginia Willis	Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians	Mississippi
Mr. Jerry Wolfe	Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians	North Carolina
Vacant	Catawba Indian Nation	South Carolina
Mr. Reggie Tupponce	Upper Mattaponi Tribe	Virginia

Elders Advisory Council Recognition

Tribal Elders were recently presented with a certificate of appreciation from NRCS State Conservationists for serving as their state's Elder representative on the SEAIWG. Their continuous dedication, support, contributions as a facilitator, guide and teacher of Tribal cultures to USDA agencies and their employees, has helped ensure a strong relationship is being established, maintained and enhanced as we work to get USDA programs and activities delivered to Indian Country. Their participation in Local, State, Regional and National meetings providing a voice for Tribes and American Indian landowners addressing Tribal issues with USDA programs is commendable and needed. It is because of their voice that we have heard, listened and implemented changes within USDA to remove barriers that have limited participation in USDA programs and hopefully made USDA more accessible to Tribes and American Indian Landowners. We congratulate these Elders in their efforts to help Tribes and American Indian Landowners "Help the Land".



Dr. William Puckett, Alabama State Conservationist, (right), presents Elder Billy Smith with the award.



James E. Tillman Sr., Georgia State Conservationist, (right), presents Chief Marian McCormick with the award.



Tim Oakes, Mississippi Tribal Liaison, (left), presents Elder Virginia Willis with the award.



John McCoy, North Carolina Tribal Liaison, (right), presents Elder Jerry Wolfe with the award.

Elders Recommendations and Comments to the Work Group

The following recommendations and comments were provided to the SEAIWG during interviews of the SEAI Advisory Council Elders. These suggestions provide needed directions to the workgroup in achieving its goals.

A. Tribal Natural Resource Concerns:

- Protection and enhancement of water quality and quantity
- Wetlands protections to ensure native cultural properties are not being inundated
- Pesticide and nutrient applications
- Forest management activities
- Cultural properties preservation
- Erosion on Tribal lands
- Ensuring education for future generations.

B. Ensure Tribal Participation in NRCS and all other USDA programs:

- Provide USDA program training meetings to all Tribal Leaders, Elders and Tribal members and landowners
- Holding meetings in the Tribal Communities
- Hold the American Indian Program Delivery Initiative Meetings
- Partner with agencies and Tribal organizations to get USDA program information distributed throughout Indian Country
- Ensure Tribal Leaders have opportunity to be engaged in program rules and regulations
- Advertise in the Tribal newsletters, websites that you are holding a meeting for American Indian farmers to acquaint them with NRCS programs.

C. Identify American Indian landowners that would benefit from NRCS programs:

- A potential list of Tribal member agricultural producers can be obtained from Tribal leadership headquarters
- Tribal Census
- The Tribes are able to send out surveys to their members. This would be an excellent way to obtain the Tribal members who are farmers or producers
- Hold conservation tours to show completed conservation practices and have success stories given by participants.

Chapter 3 Work Group Structure



NRCS Staff Serving American Indians in the Southeast

The NRCS Southeast American Indian Work Group consists of members who are appointed by their respective NRCS State Conservationists to represent the state. Leadership is provided by the Work Group Champion who is appointed by the Southeast Regional Conservationist. State Conservationists within the Southeast Region serve as advisors to the workgroup.

Current Southeast American Indian Work Group Members

Person	Work Group Position	Work Title	State
James E. Tillman, Sr.	Work Group Champion	State Conservationist	Georgia
David Elliott	Member	Tribal Liaison - FT	Alabama
Wendy Smith	Alt. Member	AIAN-EPM	Alabama
Alvin Peer	Member	Outreach Coordinator	Arkansas
Clifford Starling	Member	Tribal Liaison - PT	Florida
Han Nguyen	Alt. Member	AIAN-EPM	Florida
Debbie Henry	Member	Tribal Liaison - PT	Georgia
Robyn Ledford	Alt. Member	AIAN-EPM	Georgia
Kent Stewart	Member	AIAN-EPM	Kentucky
Bobby Bradley	Alt. Member	Resource Con.	Kentucky
Randolph Joseph	Member	ASTC-FO	Louisiana
Holly Martien	Alt. Member	Tribal Liaison - PT	Louisiana
Tim Oakes	Member	Tribal Liaison - FT	Mississippi
John McCoy	Member	Tribal Liaison - FT	North Carolina
Kara Cassels	Alt. Member	AIAN-EPM	North Carolina
Vacant			Puerto Rico
Lakeisha Barber	Member	Tribal Liaison – PT	South Carolina
Valerie Oksendahl	Alt. Member	AIAN-EPM	South Carolina
Kelly Gupton	Member	AIAN-EPM	Tennessee
Melissa Allen	Member	AIAN-EPM	Virginia
Twyla Gendron	Alt. Member	Contract Specialist	Virginia

Current Southeast American Indian Work Group Advisors

Person	Work Group Position - Title	State
Terry Cosby	Acting Regional Conservationist – Southeast	Washington, DC
Ronald A. Harris	Acting, National Tribal Liaison	Rosslyn, VA
Dr. William E. Puckett	State Conservationist	Alabama
Michael Sullivan	State Conservationist	Arkansas
Russell Morgan	State Conservationist	Florida
James E. Tillman, Sr.	State Conservationist	Georgia
Karen Woodrich	State Conservationist	Kentucky
Kevin Norton	State Conservationist	Louisiana
Kevin Kennedy	Acting State Conservationist	Mississippi
Tim Beard	State Conservationist	North Carolina
Edwin Almodovar	State Conservationist	Puerto Rico
Ann English	State Conservationist	South Carolina
Kevin Brown	State Conservationist	Tennessee
Kevin Brown	State Conservationist	Tennessee
Jack Bricker	State Conservationist	Virginia
Jack Lewis	AIANEA SE Representative	Georgia

Current Elders Serving On Southeast American Indian Advisory Council

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Vacant		Louisiana
Ms. Virginia Willis	Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians	Mississippi
Mr. Jerry Wolfe	Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians	North Carolina
Vacant	Catawba Indian Nation	South Carolina
Mr. Reggie Tupponce	Upper Mattaponi Tribe	Virginia

Chapter 4 Work Group Goals



Summary of Goals

- Goal 1** Increase the conservation of natural resources on American Indian lands.
- Goal 2** Sustain and establish, where needed, working relationships with American Indians so they are familiar with the services available and know where to go to receive assistance.
- Goal 3** Enhance the knowledge of NRCS leadership about the conservation needs of American Indians and the unique definition of responsibilities to provide services.
- Goal 4** Improve the knowledge and skills of NRCS employees who work with American Indians.
- Goal 5** Increase awareness of and provide training to NRCS employees in their responsibilities to identify, protect and conserve tribal cultural properties.

Detailed Goals, Objectives and Strategies

Goal 1 Increase the conservation of natural resources on American Indian lands.

Objective A: Tribal Liaisons, AIAN-EPM's and Outreach Coordinators provide support to field staff in how to assist American Indians.

Objective B: Host American Indian Program Delivery Initiative Meetings for American Indian Tribal officials and NRCS staff to improve working relationships and knowledge about effect conservation strategies.

- Strategy 1 Include success stories to show American Indians commitment to conservation
- Strategy 2 Provide training to NRCS field staff on how to improve services
- Strategy 3 Include USDA officials to sustain and improve the working relationship with Tribal Leaders
- Strategy 4 Support attendance by Tribal Elders by including them on the program
- Strategy 5 Gain insight from Tribal Elders by having them provide words of wisdom and guidance during opening sessions

Goal 2 Sustain and establish, where needed, working relationships with American Indians so they are familiar with the services available to them and know where to go to receive assistance.

Objective A: Strengthen the involvement of the Southeast American Indian Work Group and Advisory Council.

- Strategy 1 Ensure Elder participation on workgroup teleconferences
- Strategy 2 Involve Elders on State Technical Committees
- Strategy 3 Invite and include Elders in NRCS Leadership meetings

Objective B: Provide each Federal, State Tribes, Community Based Organizations and individual American Indian landowners with current information about NRCS programs.

- Strategy 1 Provide information through mail, email and website concerning NRCS programs
- Strategy 2 Host meetings for the Tribes
- Strategy 3 Attend Tribal natural resources meetings
- Strategy 4 Attend Tribal College and Career Fairs and special events when invited

Detailed Goals, Objectives and Strategies (cont.)

Objective C: Provide all federally recognized Tribes with a NRCS Tribal Liaison to ensure government-to-government consultation.

- Strategy 1 Tribal Liaison communicates regularly with Tribal representatives on natural resources issues
- Strategy 2 Tribal Liaisons prepare NRCS Leadership and employees on how to work effectively with Tribal Governments and American Indian landowners
- Strategy 3 Ensure all Tribal Liaisons receive adequate training in working with Tribal Government

Objective D: AIAN-EPM'S establish contacts with and provide information to state recognized Tribes and Community Based Organizations.

Goal 3

Enhance the knowledge of NRCS leadership about the conservation needs of American Indians and the unique definition of responsibilities to provide services.

Objective A: Provide reports to the NRCS Regional Conservationist regarding activities of the Southeast American Indian Work Group.

Objective B: Offer training for NRCS leadership at the American Indian Program Delivery Initiative meetings.

Objective C: Write up success stories and share with appropriate NRCS leadership.

Goal 4

Improve the knowledge and skills of NRCS employees who work with American Indians.

Objective A: Host regular teleconferences for Southeast American Indian Work Group members to network and share information.

Objective B: Southeast American Indian Work Group members provide information to NRCS employees within their state on how to effectively establish relations and work with American Indians.

Objective C: Increase membership involvement with the National American Indian/Alaska Native Employees Association (AIANEA).

Detailed Goals, Objectives and Strategies (cont.)

Objective D: Ensure Southeast American Indian Work Group members attend NRCS training courses and other classes on establishing and sustaining effective working relationships with Tribes.

Goal 5 Increase awareness of and provide training to NRCS employees in their responsibilities to identify, protect and conserve tribal cultural properties.

Objective A: Establish and maintain relationships with Tribal Historical Preservation Officers (THPO), State Historical Preservation Officers and State Cultural Resource Specialist.

Objective B: Provide cultural resource training to all NRCS employees.

Objective C: Ensure consultation with federally recognized tribes.



Elder Billy Smith (right) and David Elliot, Tribal Liaison, AL review levee ponds retrofitted for migratory bird habitat.



Alabama Elder Billy Smith, in a field of wildflowers on the Magnolia Branch Wildlife Reserve.

Chapter 5

NRCS Staff, Tribal Information, Maps



The states committed to this work group are shown below, along with NRCS staffing that ensures NRCS programs are made available to all tribes, individual American Indian landowners and Tribal Community Based Organizations.

NRCS Staff Serving Tribes

State	Federal Tribes	State Tribes	Tribal Community Based Organizations	AIAN-EPM	Tribal Liaison	Outreach Coordinator
Alabama	1	8		1	1 - FT	1
Arkansas				1		1
Florida	2	4		1	1 - PT	1
Georgia		3		1	1 - PT	2
Kentucky			1	1		1
Louisiana	4	10	8	1	1 - PT	1
Mississippi	1		1	1	1 - FT	1
North Carolina	1	8	4	1	1 - FT	1
Puerto Rico				1		
South Carolina	1	8	7	1	1 - PT	1
Tennessee			6	1		1
Virginia		11	2	1		1
TOTAL	10	52	29	12	7	12

- AI/AN EPM = American Indian/Alaskan Native Emphasis Program Manager, which is a collateral duty.
- Tribal Liaisons are assigned to specific Tribes and are either part-time or full-time in that capacity.
- Outreach Coordinators serve many types of underserved customers including
- American Indians.

Federally Recognized Tribes in the Twelve Southeast States

State	Name of Tribe	Number of Members	Approximate Acreage in Reservation	Approximate Acreage in Tribal Land
AL	Poarch Band of Creek Indians	3,100	401	13,006
AR	No Federal Tribes			
FL	Miccosukee Tribe of Florida	600	75,000	
FL	Seminole Tribe of Florida	6,350	89,000	
GA	No Federal Tribes			
KY	No Federal Tribes			
LA	Chitimacha Tribe of Louisiana	1,350	445	555
LA	Coushatta Tribe of Louisiana	910	1,048	5,916
LA	Jena Band of Choctaw Indians	309	64	104
LA	Tunica-Biloxi Indian Tribe of Louisiana	648	416	
MS	Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians	8,760	35,000	2,600
NC	Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians	14,000	56,875	
PR	No Federal Tribes			
SC	Catawba Indian Nation	2700	711	333
TN	No Federal Tribes			
VA	No Federal Tribes			

All numbers and acreage are estimated and not exact figures

State Recognized Tribes in the Twelve Southeast States

State	Name of Tribe	Number of Members	Approximate Acreage in State Reservation	Approximate Acreage in Tribal Land
AL	Echota Cherokee Tribe of Alabama	33,000		100
AL	Cherokee Tribe of Northeast Alabama	4,900		10
AL	Ma-Chis Lower Creek Indian Tribe of Alabama	5,000		10
AL	Star Clan of Muscogee Creeks	350		20
AL	Cher-O-Creek Intra Tribal Indians	350		5
AL	MOW A Band of Choctaw Indians	9,000		25
AL	Piqua Shawnee Tribe	250		
AL	United Cherokee Ani-Yun-Wiya Nation	500		1
AR	No State Tribes			
FL	Perdido Bay Tribe	245		10
FL	Santa Rosa County Creek Indian Tribe, Inc.	1,000		28
FL	Muscogee Nations of Florida	260		10
FL	Choctaw Nation of Florida	77		
GA	Lower Muskogee Creek Tribe	3,000		80
GA	Georgia Tribe of Eastern Cherokee	450		
GA	Cherokee of Georgia Tribal Council	450		30
KY	No State Tribes			
LA	Addai Caddo Tribe	612		

State Recognized Tribes in the Twelve Southeast States (cont.)

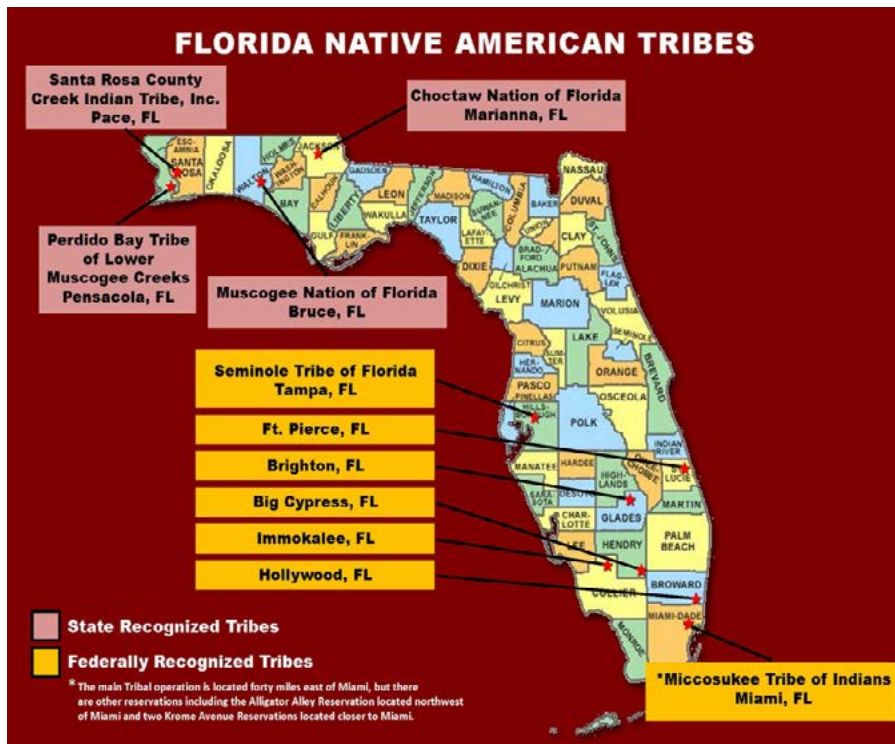
LA	Biloxi-Chitimacha Confederation of Muskogee	2,545		
LA	Choctaw-Apache Community of Ebarb	2,237		32
LA	Clifton Choctaw	500		
LA	Four Winds Tribe Louisiana Cherokee Confederacy	1,687		15
LA	Grand Caillou/Dulac Band	1,200		
LA	Isle de Jean Charles Band	250		
LA	Louisiana Choctaw Tribe			
LA	Pointe-Au-Chien Indian Tribe	680		
LA	United Houma Nation	17,000		
MS	No State Tribes			
NC	Coharie Intra-Tribal Council			
NC	Meherrin Tribe			
NC	Haliwa-Saponi Tribe			
NC	Lumbee Tribe of NC.	40,000		
NC	Occaneechi Band of the Saponi Nation			
NC	Sappony			
NC	Waccamaw-Siouan Tribe			
SC	Wassamasaw Tribe of Varnertown Indians	1,500		
SC	Beaver Creek Indians	2,000		
SC	Edisto Natchez-Kusso Indians			
SC	Pee Dee Tribe of South Carolina	2,000		
SC	Pee Dee Nation of Upper South Carolina			
SC	Santee Indian Organization	381		
SC	Waccamaw Indian People			
SC	Sumter Band of Cheraw	82		
TN	No State Tribes			
VA	Pamunkey Indian Tribe Reservation	100	1,200	
VA	Mattaponi Reservation	450	150	
VA	Nansemond Tribe	300		
VA	Chickahominy Tribe	840		225
VA	Eastern Chickahominy Tribe	150		
VA	Rappahannock Indian Tribe	300		119
VA	Upper Mattaponi	575		32
VA	Monacan	1,600		118
VA	Patawomeck Indian Tribe	1,300		
VA	Nottaway Indian Tribe	120		
VA	Cheroenhaka (Nottoway) Indian Tribe	272		100

All numbers and acreage are estimated and not exact figures

State Maps highlighting Tribes within the Southeast



State Maps highlighting Tribes within the Southeast (cont.)



Chapter 6

Workgroup Accomplishments/Success Stories



- A. NRCS Program Funding in Indian Country in the Southeast
- B. American Indian Program Delivery Initiative Meetings hosted by Southeast Work Group
- C. North Carolina Success Story – Improving Access to Native Farmland
- D. Mississippi Success Story – Keeping Hominy Tradition Alive and Profitable
- E. Mississippi Success Story – NRCS Staff Brings Mississippi Needles to Oregon Native Americans
- F. Georgia Success Story – Cooperative Development
- G. Alabama Success Story – PBCI Receives Forestry Honors
- H. Alabama Success Story – PBCI Recognized for Forestry Achievements
- I. Louisiana Success Story – Chitimacha Tribe of Louisiana River Cane Project
- J. Louisiana Success Story – Louisiana Tribal Conservation Advisory Council
- K. Florida Success Story - NRCS works closely with Native American Tribes

A. NRCS Program Funding in Indian Country in the Southeast

NRCS programs have proved to be a tremendous opportunity for the Tribes within our Southeast Work Group boundaries to enhance, improve, and preserve their natural resources. By forming strong relationships between NRCS and the Tribal leaders, we have several Tribes that are now participating in USDA and NRCS programs. We have highlighted programs administered by NRCS, but there are many other USDA Agencies that have provided funds as well. It is through these programs that Tribes as well as individual American Indian landowners are able to address their resource concerns on cropland, pastureland, and forestlands to preserve, enhance and maintain for future generations.

The following is an overview of funds. The information below is for the years 2008–2012 that includes funding through the following programs; Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP), the Wildlife Habitat Incentive Program (WHIP) and the Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) in the Southeast Region.

Southeast Region Funding for Tribes – 46 Contracts for a total of \$4,458,077.

Southeast Region Funding for American Indians/Alaskan Natives – 498 Contracts for a total of \$15,037,754.

Currently NRCS has obligated over 544 contracts for a total of \$19,495,831 with Tribes and individual American Indian Landowners within our Southeast workgroup area.

NRCS National Office Long Range Plans

1. Increase conservation assistance to Tribes and American Indians/Alaska Natives, working through CBOs.
2. Increase conservation assistance to Tribes and American Indians/Alaska Natives by engaging TSPs to work closely with these groups.
3. Increase conservation assistance to Tribes and American Indians/Alaska Natives who have conservation plans and participate in NRCS programs.
4. Increase conservation by conducting on farm demonstrations in Indian Country.



Chief Jason Weller



Leonard Jordan, Southeast Regional Conservationist, speaking at the 2009 Program Delivery Training Meeting in Atmore, AL

B. American Indian Program Delivery Initiative Meetings hosted by the Southeast Work Group

The Southeast Work Group hosted American Indian Program Delivery Initiative meetings in 2000, 2002, 2003, 2005, 2009 and 2010 to develop and improve working relationships with the Tribes and USDA Agencies throughout the Southeast. The meetings were all hosted by a Tribe on Tribal lands where there could be two-way communication about the programs offered by USDA and the type of services needed by the Tribes to effectively manage their natural resources.



SEAIWG Members during the May 2010 American Indian Program Delivery Initiative Meeting at the Seminole Tribe of Florida in Hollywood, Florida.

The stated objectives of the meetings are to:

- Communicate with Tribal leaders about how to access USDA programs and services to American Indian producers and landowners.
- Provide a listening forum to surface concerns that Southeastern Tribes have in accessing USDA conservation programs and services.
- Demonstrate ways that NRCS employees can work more effectively with American Indians and American Indian Tribal ways of government.
- Encourage the formation of Tribal conservation districts.
- Provide opportunity for input on the Farm Bill.

B. American Indian Program Delivery Initiative Meetings hosted by the Southeast Work Group (cont.)

Most of the states involved sponsored representatives from at least one of their Tribes to attend the meeting. In addition to the NRCS Tribal Liaisons, the AIAN-EPM's and State Conservationists from most of the states attended. Speakers included a wide range of federal agency representatives from USDA headquarters which included NRCS, Rural Development (RD), and the Farm Service Agency (FSA).

A highlight at each meeting is receiving guidance and input from the work group Elders Council who offered many insights into the difficulties that need to be overcome to establish effective conservation programs on Tribal lands. Another highlight was the tour of Tribal grounds that included conservation practices that had been installed.



Events during the 2010 Program Delivery Meeting in Hollywood, FL. Top Left; Elder Richard Bowers. Top Right; Elder Jerry Wolfe. Bottom: Attendees of the Program Delivery Meeting.

C. North Carolina Success Story – Improving Access to Native Farmland

NRCS and the Eastern Band of Cherokee are working together to protect natural resources and improve access to native farmland. Shown in the picture are Johi Griffin, Historical and Cultural Sites Keeper and John McCoy NRCS Tribal Liaison for NC. Together they have been working with EQIP to improve access roads to the farming areas at Katuwah, the Mother Town site of the Cherokee along the Tuckaseegee River in Western North Carolina.

The Eastern Band of Cherokee purchased 300 acres of property from a local non-member, several years ago and has allowed members to farm garden plots or large fields of corn, hay and other produce. Through years of little maintenance the roads became nearly impassable. At present, several miles of access roads have been restructured, with several more to be completed this summer. Several of the Tribal Elders have expressed their thanks to Griffin and McCoy for allowing them to drive to their plots in their cars, which they couldn't do in past years.

This is a very sensitive area due to all the artifacts just under the surface of top soil. Griffin said many times and repeated by McCoy, "We have to be careful and not disturb the remains and artifacts of our ancestors."

NRCS has cost shared many EQIP and WHIP projects over the past 15 years and have assisted with many acres of resource enhancement and protection, while improving the water quality of the many of mountain streams.



Johi Griffin, Historical, Cultural Sites Keeper and John McCoy NRCS Tribal Liaison

D. Mississippi Success Story - Keeping Hominy Tradition Alive and Profitable



A member of the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians removes the kernels from a corn of cob, one step in the hominy-making process.

For special meals like those on birthdays and Christmas, members of the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians include hominy on the menu—but hominy, essentially dried corn kernels, is expensive to purchase. That's why USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) is working to help the tribe grow and harvest hickory king corn and other heirloom white varieties and process them to make hominy.

Hominy is a traditional food for Native Americans during the winter. To help restore this tradition, NRCS provided the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians, comprised of about 10,000 members across the region, with conservational technical

assistance, helping them transform idle land into a hominy-making enterprise. Besides enabling the tribe to provide their own locally grown, fresh produce, growing the corn has trimmed expenses for them. It costs about \$25 to purchase the corn used to make one gallon of hominy. If grown and made on site, the hominy costs about \$16 per gallon.



Members of the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians are making corn into hominy, a process that allows for better storage of the crucial grain.

D. Mississippi Success Story - Keeping Hominy Tradition Alive and Profitable (cont.)

Making hominy starts in the fields, when the corn is left to dry for 120 days. Then, the corn is harvested and kernels are removed from cobs. The kernels are stored in a cool location and left to dry for an additional three months. This step is important because it kills the seed germ inside. Next, the work begins. The Choctaw pound the corn, using a wooden mortise called a kiti. The smashed kernels are sifted and cleaned, resulting in the final product—powdered corn that is used for cornmeal. The whole hominy experience, from soil to spoon, gives the tribe's members a chance to rekindle the agricultural traditions of their ancestors. "Keeping those traditions alive is a major emphasis of NRCS' work with Native Americans," says Tim Oakes, the agency's tribal liaison to the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians.

The tribe has two acres of corn for hominy, and some of the tribe's members have planted corn at home. NRCS helped the tribe locate the optimal soil for growing corn as well as other plants, such as giant cane, another significant plant to Native American cultures. Information on the plants that have played integral roles in the lives of Native Americans can be found on the NRCS Plants Database.



A kiti, being made in this picture, is a wooden mortise that Native Americans use to pound corn into hominy.

E. Mississippi Success Story - NRCS Staff Brings Mississippi Needles to Oregon Native Americans



Members of the Puget Salish Tribe in the Northwest are now using Southeastern longleaf pine needles from Mississippi to build baskets, all because of a connection made between two employees of USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) from the Gulf Coast to the West Coast.

NRCS Soil Conservation Technician Allen Hughes mails longleaf pine needles from the forest in his Mississippi backyard to Oregon to be used to make baskets, a Native American tradition across the United States.

NRCS District Conservationist Andrea Mann in Pendleton, Ore. read about Allen Hughes, who is a soil conservation technician in Poplarville, Miss. and a longleaf pine forest enthusiast, on the NRCS employee website. Hughes grew up and continues to live among the pine trees, which produce a needle that Mann learned is an excellent ingredient for basket weaving, a tradition common to many Native American tribes.



In Oregon, NRCS District Conservationist Andrea Mann, constructs two baskets with longleaf pine from Mississippi.

E. Mississippi Success Story - NRCS Staff Brings Mississippi Needles to Oregon Native Americans (cont)



The needles are 7–18 inches long and are more suitable for weaving baskets than the needles from the ponderosa pine trees indigenous to Oregon. It takes more of the short needles to make a basket, making the longleaf quicker and easier to use. That's why Mann asked Hughes if he could send the needles for her and members of the Salish tribe.

Longleaf pine trees have needles that are 7–18 inches long.

So far, he has sent 50 pounds of pine straw—another name for the needles—to Oregon, which he raked in the forest near his home. She paid for the postage and returned the favor by sending him two completed baskets. The baskets are three to four inches wide and two to three inches tall. They take 8–12 hours to make. Most tribes make baskets or other containers to hold food, water or personal items, what Mann called historical “Tupperware.” “Nowadays, they’re used as decorations,” she says.

As a Native American with ties to the Tuscarora Tribe of the Carolinas, she values the importance of the basket-making tradition. Mann would like to see other tribes start using the pine needles, too. “Maybe the availability of longleaf pine needles will spur more tribes to return to this important tradition,” she says. Any pine needles can be used to make baskets. Hughes was happy to share the needles from Mississippi’s longleaf pine trees, an icon of the Gulf of Mexico coastal plain landscape. Longleaf pine forests once spanned from Texas to Virginia, but pressures from development, timbering and fire suppression practices have depleted the ecosystem to a mere four percent of its original range. NRCS offers financial and technical assistance to landowners wanting to plant and enhance longleaf pine forests. “These baskets are a great way to put the needles to use, continue important cultural traditions and share the important story of restoring longleaf forests,” Hughes says.

F. Georgia Success Story – Cooperative Development

The Golden Triangle Resource Conservation and Development (RC&D) Council worked with Principal Chief Marian S. McCormick, Lower Muskogee Creek Tribe, to obtain funding for a grant for cooperative development. The tribe was awarded \$15,000 to develop agri-tourism and cultural tourism. The money is being used to develop a business plan, provide board training for cooperative members, website development, marketing plan and more.

This cooperative development effort will strengthen the tribe and help them become more cohesive and marketable than ever. In a very short time the tribe will see the following benefits; increase sales of agricultural products, create jobs, sales from agricultural and cultural tourism activities, grant and business opportunities and Tribal village improvement.

An additional \$15,000 has been awarded to the tribe to assist the tribe in their agri-tourism activities; the Golden Triangle RC&D hired two landscape architects to develop a conceptual plan for the tribal grounds and village. NRCS offered assistance to the tribe in applying for a NRCS Conservation Innovations Grant (CIG) to promote education and conservation of the land.



Left to right: Jerome Brown, Former RC&D Coordinator, Debbie Henry, Tribal Liaison, Chief Marian McCormick, Elder Representative, Billy Roland, Golden Triangle RC&D, and James E. Tillman Sr., State Conservationist.

G. Alabama Success Story – Poarch Band of Creek Indians Receive Forestry Honors

Leaders of the Poarch Band of Creek Indians (PBCI) in Atmore, AL were surprised by the announcement that they had achieved three prestigious certifications for their stewardship and forest management activities on the Magnolia Branch Wildlife Reserve. At the June 16, United South and Eastern Tribe's (USET) meeting in Mobile, the PBCI received certification for the Alabama Natural Resources Council's TREASURE Forest Award, the USDA-Forest Service's Forestry Stewardship Program, and the American Tree Farm System's Tree Farm Program.



Poarch Band of Creek Indians Receive Forestry TREASURE Forest, Stewardship, and Tree Farm Awards. Left to right: Escambia County Alabama Forestry Commission (AFC) Forester Madeline Hildreth, NRCS State Conservationist Dr. William Puckett, Escambia County AFC Wildlife Biologist Randall Seal, Poarch Band of Creek Indians (PBCI) Elder Billy Smith, NRCS Tribal Liaison David Elliott, NRCS Chief Dave White, CEO of PBCI Enterprises Tim Martin, AFC State Forester Linda Casey, NRCS State Staff Forester Tim Albritton, and PCBI Chairman Buford Rolin.

The TREASURE Forest award is a flagship program of the Alabama Natural Resources Council, a Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) partner. The program was developed in 1974 to recognize landowners who are practicing sound, sustainable and multiple-use forest management. To date, approximately 2,000 landowners have received the TREASURE Forest certification, representing just over two million acres in Alabama. There are over 400,000 non-industrial private forest landowners in the state; to be one of the 2,000 landowners to have achieved this status is quite an accomplishment.

In presenting the certifications, Linda Casey, State Forester with the Alabama Forestry Commission, said, "I want to recognize the hard work that has gone into receiving not only the TREASURE Forest Award but also the Tree Farm and Forest Stewardship certifications. This is the first time that a landowner has received all three certifications (at one time). I commend the Tribe for this achievement." Dr. William Puckett, NRCS State Conservationist, said, "The PBCI are the epitome of good land stewards. They have put their commitment of preserving our natural resources into action. NRCS is proud to be a partner with the PBCI."

G. Alabama Success Story – Poarch Band of Creek Indians Receive Forestry Honors (cont.)

The Magnolia Branch Wildlife Reserve is mostly timberland and is used as a recreational area for the Tribe and their guests. By working with various state and federal agencies, the Tribe has sustained, protected, and enhanced 4,156 acres of timberland and 50 lakes. The PBCI partnered with NRCS to secure financial and technical assistance for site preparation on 800 acres planted to longleaf pine, and to install firebreaks and prescribe burn over 1,200 acres of pine plantation. The wildlife accomplishments included planting 30 acres of food plots to cool and warm season forages, building numerous wood duck boxes and bird houses, and thinning 1,280 acres to improve wildlife habitat.

Chairman Buford Rolin accepted four plaques to display in Tribal offices and three signs to post in the Magnolia Branch Wildlife Reserve to demonstrate the Tribe’s commitment to land stewardship. Rolin said, “The projects that we have worked with NRCS on have really been rewarding to the Tribe. I encourage all of the USET Tribes to take advantage of this agency, because they have a lot to offer.” When addressing the USET board members, Rolin said, “We just want everyone to know how much we appreciate this recognition, but more importantly, we want to share with our other Tribal people to take advantage of NRCS. They have a lot to offer. They are our friends.”



Elder Billy Smith and David Elliot, Tribal Liaison, reviewing EQIP practice.

H. Alabama Success Story - Poarch Band of Creek Indians Recognized for Forestry Achievements

The Poarch Band of Creek Indians (PBCI) recently received the Helene Mosley Memorial TREASURE Forest Award for the South Region at the Alabama Natural Resource Council's Awards Banquet, in Auburn, Alabama. This event recognizes forest owners who have shown exemplary dedication to the wise stewardship of natural resources. Dr. James Shepard, Auburn University Dean and Professor of the School of Forestry and Wildlife Sciences presented James W. (Billy) Smith, PBCI Tribal Elder and Manager of the Magnolia Branch Wildlife Reserve (MBWR); and Keith Martin, Tribal Council Member, with a plaque, a certificate, and a limited edition painting.



Photo by Kelvin Daniels.

Left to right: Dr. James Shepard presents Helene Mosley TREASURE Forest Award for the South Region to Billy Smith and Keith Martin.

A video of the Tribe's forest accomplishments was produced by the Alabama Forestry Commission and shown at the banquet. The video is available on YouTube at: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vfv3TmOia7g>.

MBWR is mostly timberland and is used as a recreational area for the Tribe and their guests. By working with various state and federal agencies, the Tribe has sustained, protected, and enhanced 6,000 acres of timberland and 50 lakes. The PBCI partnered with USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) to secure financial and technical assistance for site preparation on about 800 acres planted to longleaf pine, and to install permanent firebreaks and prescribe burn over 2,000 acres of pine plantation. The wildlife accomplishments include planting 37 acres of food plots to cool and warm season forages, building numerous wood duck boxes and bird houses and thinning 2,000 acres to improve wildlife habitat. They are attempting to reestablish native grasses.

"After clearing the understory through a controlled burn, we are seeing the comeback of native grasses that have been here all along," said Smith. The Helene Mosley Memorial TREASURE Forest Award promotes forestry through education. David Elliott, NRCS Tribal Liaison, said, "One of the opportunities that the PBCI provide is educational activities. Through partnerships with the Alabama Forestry Commission, Longleaf Alliance, USFWS, NRCS, and other agencies, the Tribe hosts tours that promote best management practices, good forestry and wildlife management."

H. Alabama Success Story - Poarch Band of Creek Indians Recognized for Forestry Achievements (cont.)

Smith added, “One thing we are proud to offer our Tribe and the public is the pristine Big Escambia Creek. We own 12-14 miles of the creek bank, so we are able to control a lot of what goes on along the banks, which includes the MBWR.”

They often cater to Boy Scouts, churches, and other groups who wish to reserve the area. The MBWR offers canoeing, kayaking, tubing, zip lines, horseback trails, birding, and camping. They have a campground with 82 camp sites - 49 with full hookups and others with only power and water. Smith said they also offer boon dock camping, which is primitive camping in the more remote areas of MBWR.

Smith is proud of the outdoor activities they make available to the younger generations. He said, “Almost everything we do targets the young people. I feel like we can’t do enough for them. I want to get them out into the woods to walk and enjoy a little bit of the outside. If we can help just one kid by bringing them to MBWR to spend some time in the woods, then we have accomplished a lot.”

MBWR is home to the PBCI box turtle habitat program. They have a penned spot where they put the box turtles to acclimate to the area and then turn them loose. They use the box turtles as educational tools by taking and showing them to groups to demonstrate what they are doing to help protect and develop habitat for them.



Signage on the Partnerships joining together with Poarch Band of Creek Indians to develop box turtle habitat.



Three Box Turtles used to educate youth.

I. Louisiana Success Story – Chitimacha Tribe of Louisiana River Cane Project

The Chitimacha settled on land around the bayous of what is now known as the Atchafalaya Basin in Louisiana around 500 A.D. Through the centuries, the Chitimacha Tribe has seen great prosperity; fought battles against the French and English to defend their land and people; faced encroachment by the Spanish; suffered the bonds of slavery; and faced extinction. Today, about 1,300 tribal members remain.

“People ask us, ‘Where do you originally come from,’” said Kimberly Walden, Cultural Director and Tribal Historic Preservation Officer for the Chitimacha Tribe of Louisiana. “We always tell them that we have always been here.”



Beautiful examples of Chitimacha baskets in front of some of the first river cane grown at NRCS' Golden Meadow Plant Materials Center.

Through the spoken word, the Chitimacha language, customs, rituals and traditions have passed from generation to generation. The ancient art of weaving baskets from wild cane can be traced back to the earliest legends of the Chitimacha Tribe, and today, basket weaving remains an important tradition that family members share.

In the late 1990s it became very hard to find wild cane for weaving, and much of the cane found was on private land and not readily available to Chitimacha basket weavers. It was feared that this ancient tradition could be lost because of the scarcity of wild cane.

In 2001, the Chitimacha Tribe and the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) entered into a consultative process to develop and implement a “Chitimacha River Cane Project.” Project goals included plant identification, collection, propagation and field establishment of river cane (*Arundinaria* sp.). In consultation with the Chitimacha, NRCS selected superior ecotypes to meet the objectives of the tribe and identified appropriate sites on tribal land for re-establishment of the river cane.

In the years since, the river cane that was originally collected was propagated at NRCS' Golden Meadow Plant Materials Center in Galliano, LA, and returned to tribal lands. Subsequent collections and plantings have occurred to ensure that one day Chitimacha basket weavers will be able to harvest river cane in a traditional 10-year rotation and allow for regeneration.



Left to Right: Sophe Kilchrist, St. Mary Soil and Water Conservation District; Juanita Clements, Farm Service Agency; Patra Ghergich, USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service; and Kimberly Walden, Chitimacha Tribe of Louisiana preparing to plant river cane on the Chitimacha Reservation.

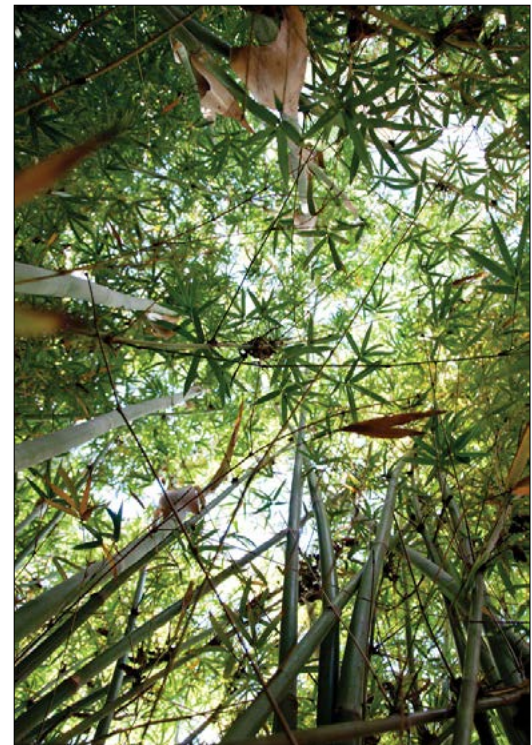


Kimberly Walden, Cultural Director and Tribal Historic Preservation Officer for the Chitimacha Tribe of Louisiana discusses river cane project.



Chitimacha Tribe members, NRCS Golden Meadow Plant Materials Center employees, NRCS Franklin Field Office employees, St. Mary Soil and Water Conservation District employees, and teams of local volunteers planting river cane on the reservation.

Today, the Chitimacha Tribe, NRCS Golden Meadow Plant Materials Center, NRCS Franklin Field Office, St. Mary Soil and Water Conservation District, and teams of local volunteers (Chitimacha Fire Protection, Baldwin Fire Department, Chitimacha Public Works, local farmers, and more) work together to harvest and plant river cane (*Arundinaria* sp.) to ensure current and future generations of Chitimacha basket weavers have access to the wild cane of their ancestors.



River cane growing on the Chitimacha Tribe of Louisiana's reservation.

J. Louisiana Success Story – Louisiana Tribal Conservation Advisory Council



Inaugural meeting of the Louisiana Tribal Conservation Advisory Council. From left to right: Kimberly Walden, Chitimacha Tribe of Louisiana; Lillie Williamson, Jena Band of Choctaw Indians; Kevin Norton, USDA NRCS; Kathy Peoples, Coushatta Tribe of Louisiana; Michael Tarpley, Coushatta Tribe of Louisiana; Randolph Joseph, USDA NRCS; and Jonas John, Coushatta Tribe of Louisiana.

Louisiana's Tribal Conservation Advisory Council met for the Council's inaugural meeting on November 7, 2012, in Charenton, LA. This meeting was hosted by the Chitimacha Tribe of Louisiana and attended by representatives of the Chitimacha Tribe of Louisiana, Coushatta Tribe of Louisiana, and Jena Band of Choctaw Indians, as well as USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) State Conservationist Kevin Norton and his staff.

Louisiana, provide an avenue to educate landowners on cultural resources, and help reduce cultural resource problems on conservation sites.

The purpose of the advisory council is to provide a voice to Louisiana's federally recognized tribes in the conservation planning process, improve lines of communication between USDA agencies and federally recognized tribes in

Primary issues of concern discussed during the November meeting included a consultation memorandum of understanding between federally recognized tribes in Louisiana and the NRCS, geographic areas of concern for tribes in Louisiana, council membership, working relationships, and projects for collaboration.

In February 2013, the council met again in Elton, LA. This meeting was hosted by the Coushatta Tribe of Louisiana. Representatives of all four of Louisiana's federally recognized tribes were present: Chitimacha Tribe of Louisiana, Coushatta Tribe of Louisiana, Jena Band of Choctaw Indians, and the Tunica-Biloxi Tribe of Louisiana. USDA Rural Development (RD) State Director Clarence Hawkins and members of his staff and State Conservationist Kevin Norton and members of his staff also participated in the February meeting.

As a result of formation of Louisiana's Tribal Conservation Advisory Council, the NRCS and RD are more aware of issues of concern for the tribes, the proper protocol for cultural resource consultation, and geographic areas of concern for the tribes. Federally recognized tribes in Louisiana are more aware of technical and financial assistance opportunities available through



February 2013 meeting of the Louisiana Tribal Conservation Advisory Council.

USDA agencies, and productive relationships are developing among USDA staff and tribes. A path forward is being charted to include enhanced working relationships, improved cultural resource consultation and open lines of communication.

K. Florida Success Story – NRCS works closely with Native American Tribes

NRCS Florida continues to work closely with the Seminole Tribe of Florida on their two reservations and on land they lease from the Miccosukee Tribe of Indians of Florida. Four Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP) contracts were recently developed for Fiscal Year (FY)-2013, amounting to approximately \$1.2 million on both the Big Cypress and Brighton Reservations. There are currently seventeen active contracts on over 25,000 acres and amounting to approximately \$3.7 million in obligated EQIP assistance.

During FY-2012, the entire Big Cypress Reservation was inventoried and Brazilian Pepper, a common invasive species in South Florida, was mapped via GPS to facilitate contracts in FY-2013 to exclusively address this problem. The same approach was taken on the Brighton Reservation for FY-2013 contracts. Practices planned for the FY-2013 EQIP include solely heavy invasive brush management to address the enormous Brazilian Pepper problem on both reservations. The removal of the Brazilian Pepper will not only improve wildlife habitat, but also provide more grazing land for cattle.

NRCS also works closely with The Perdido Bay Tribe of Southeastern Lower Muscogee Creek. They have a FY-2010 Migratory Bird Habitat Initiative (MBHI) contract utilizing Wildlife Habitat Incentive Program (WHIP) funds. The total contract amount is \$645 on 2.1 leased acres in Escambia County, FL. Under WHIP, they plan to implement brush management to treat Chinese Tallow (Popcorn tree), Wetland Wildlife Habitat Management by planting native wetland vegetation and annually planting brown top millet as a food source for migratory birds from 2011 to 2013.

The Perdido Bay Tribe of Southeastern Lower Muscogee Creek tribal leaders assist with outreach by getting information out to the Native American community about NRCS programs. Also, in the last few months NRCS employees in Florida have started working with David Elliott, Tribal Liaison with NRCS in Alabama for the Poarch Band of Creek Indians. Their tribal headquarters are located just north of the Escambia County, FL line in Escambia County, AL. NRCS will continually be working together with the Perdido Bay Tribe of Southeastern Lower Muscogee Creek to make sure tribal members in Escambia County, FL are well informed about our programs.



Left to right: Daryl Williams, NRCS, Chief Bearheart, Carlos Suarez, NRCS, Jason Bird, NRCS and Vice Chief Robert CedarBear Johns.

Chapter 7

Background Material for Plan Development



The following information provides an overview of the workgroups strengths and highlights opportunities available.

Strengths of Work Group

- Elder's Advisory Council members contribute to knowledge base.
- Regional coverage of twelve states.
- Great working relationship with understanding and concern for American Indian values and involvement in NRCS program implementation.
- Work group has built an incredible trust with Tribes.
- Good working relationships between work group members..
- Recognized nationally by NRCS and Indian groups.
- Plays a big role in USDA program delivery to Southeast Indian Country.
- Provide wisdom, knowledge, and direction for NRCS to be more effective and efficient when working within Indian Country.
- Work group has a direct relationship and good support from NRCS State Conservationists and direct connection with Regional staff working as liaisons to Tribes.
- Initiate consultation with Federally Recognized Tribes on a government-to-government basis.
- Provide quality guidance to leadership on Indian issues, i.e., conservation, cultural, environments, policies and politics.

Upcoming Opportunities for Work Group

- Group is a working prototype for other regions across the country.
- Opportunity to help other Tribes, whether in our region or not, to have the relationship we share in our region.
- Successful projects will add to our validity as a work group.
- Increase Tribal leadership involvement within NRCS and USDA.
- More Tribal participation from Tribes and American Indian landowners.
- Effectively promote partnerships between Tribes and NRCS.
- Look at more partnership opportunities with agencies, organizations and Tribes.

Threats to the Work Group

- Need for increased NRCS management support.
- Lack of support from some states.
- Lack of NRCS funding for American Indian Program Delivery Initiative Training.
- Reduced opportunities for face-to-face meetings and relationship building, which is a very important part of Native American culture.

Action Plan Summary

The Southeast American Indian Workgroup is proud of the accomplishments that have been made within Indian Country in the Southeast. While these accomplishments are commendable, it is the goal of our workgroup to continue to see NRCS, Tribes, and American Indian landowners reach new heights as we work together to protect, maintain and enhance our natural resources.



A butterfly on a wild flower for wildlife habitat



Wildflowers at Pitcher Plant Bog.



A prescribed burning of longleaf pines.

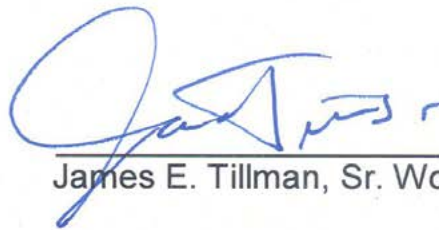


As a forage management practice a hayfield with rolled bails of hay.

The 2013 Southeast American Indian Workgroup Plan was approved on July 24, 2013
All previous versions are obsolete.



David Elliott, SEAIWG Chairman



James E. Tillman, Sr. Workgroup Champion

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