

# From the Eagle's Nest

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## SAUK-SUIATTLE TRIBE STUDIES MOUNTAIN GOAT POPULATION DECLINES

Submitted by: Chris Danielson, Sauk-Suiattle Indian Tribe

The Sauk-Suiattle Indian Tribe was awarded a Tribal Wildlife Grant (TWG) from the U.S. Fish Wildlife Service (USFWS), for the project period of May 17, 2004 to July 31, 2007 in the amount \$172,724.00. The matching component provided

by the Tribe and other project partners complemented this funding for a project total of \$221,875.00. The TWG funding compliments and facilitates ongoing collaborative efforts to research potential causes of mountain goat population declines within the Sauk-Suiattle Indian Tribe's (SSIT's)

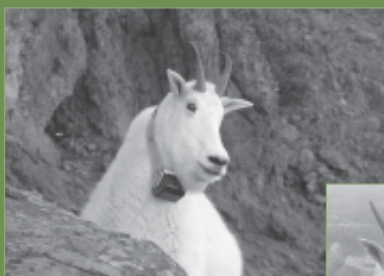
(-See next column-)

usual and accustomed hunting areas (U & A). The grant funding was awarded specifically to support baseline research (i.e. habitat modeling and population estimation), while building the Tribe's capacity to deal with natural resource issues important to Tribe, despite a relatively small tribal land ownership.

Since 2002, SSIT has worked with project partners on mountain goat research and recovery efforts. Under the umbrella of the North Cascades Mountain Goat Technical Oversight Committee, the entities represented include the Sauk-Suiattle Indian Tribe, U.S. Forest Service, National Park Service, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, Western Washington University, and the University of Washington.

Primary research efforts currently underway include: 1) developing a statistically rigorous GIS model of habitat selection model, 2) assessing and accounting for the bias associated with aerial population surveys, 3) conducting population modeling exercises to understand the potential effects/contribution of hunter harvest on population

(See p. 4 - mountain goat)



North Cascades Mountain goats have declined in population numbers. The Sauk-Suiattle Tribe received a Tribal Wildlife Grant to study causes for their decreased numbers.

## 2005 CHIEF SEALTH AWARD RECEIVED BY USFWS EMPLOYEE

Daniel Parker, of the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, received the Native American Fish & Wildlife Society's - Chief Sealth Award at the annual National Native American Fish & Wildlife Society meeting held this year in Choctaw, Mississippi.

The Native American Fish & Wildlife Society awards the prestigious Chief Sealth Award (named after the famous Chief Seattle) annually to a biologist

who has had a positive impact on Tribal wildlife and fisheries resources. Parker is a biological technician for the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service's Arizona Fishery Resources Office where he has been employed for more than 30 years. A member of the White Mountain Apache Tribe, Parker has worked with his own tribe on natural resource issues as well as more than 20 tribes

across Arizona and the Southwest.

From a press release, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, July 2005.



Daniel Parker, White Mountain Apache, Sealth Award recipient has worked 31 years with the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service and has been a member of the NAFWS for six years

## 224 MEMBER TRIBES

Agdaagux Tribal Council/Akicahak Native Community/Akiak Native Community/Akutan Traditional Council/Akanuk Traditional Council/Alderville Indian Band/Alakaket Village Council/Arapaho Business Council/Asa'carsamit Tribal Council/Atmaultuk Traditional Council/Barona Band of Mission Indians/Bay Mills Indian Community/Beave Tribal Council/Big Sandy Rancheria/Birch Creek Village Council/Blackfeet Tribe/Bois Forte Reservation/Bridgeport Indian Reservation/Caddo Indian Tribe of Oklahoma/Catawba Indian Nation/Chalkyistik Village Council/Chemehuevi Indian Tribe/Cherokee Nation/Chevak Traditional Council/Cheyenne & Arapaho Tribes of Oklahoma/Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe/Chippewa Cree Tribe of the Rocky Boy Reservation/Chippewa of Navasah Band/Chistochina Village Council/Chitimacha Tribe of Louisiana/Citizen Potawatomi Nation/Clarks Point Village Council/Coeur d'Alene Tribe/Colorado River Indian Tribes/Coville Confederate Tribes/Comanche Tribe/Confederated Tribes of Coos/Lower Umpqua and Siuslaw Indians/Confederated Salish & Kootenai Tribes/Confederated Tribes of the Goshute Reservation/Confederated Tribes of Grande Ronde/Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians/Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Reservation/Crow Creek Sioux Tribe/Eastern Band of Cherokee/Eastern Pequot/Ekwok Village Council/Elk Valley Rancheria/Ely Tribe/Evansville Tribal Council/False Pass Tribal Council/Fond du Lac Band of Lake Superior Chippewa/Fort Belknap Community Council/Fort Independence Paiute Tribe/Fort McDowell Mohave Apache/Fort Mojave Indian Tribe/Fort Sill Chiricahua Warm Springs Apache/Fort Peck Assiniboine Sioux Tribe/Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa and Chippewa/Hannahville Indian Community/Hoopa Valley Tribal Council/Hopi Tribe/Hopland Band of Pomo Indians/Houlton Band of Maliseets/Husla Tribal Council/Hyderabad Cooperative Association/Iowa Tribe of Kansas & Nebraska/Iowa Tribe of Oklahoma/Iqurmiut Traditional Council/Jamestown S'Klallam Tribe/Jicarilla Apache Tribe/Kaibab Band of Paiute Indians/Karuk Tribe/Kaw Nation of Oklahoma/Kenaitze Indian Tribe/Ketchikan Indian Corporation/Keweenaw Bay Indian Community/Kickapoo Nation of Kansas/Klamath Tribe/Klawock Cooperative Association/Kodiak Tribal Council/Kotlik Traditional Council/Lac Courte Oreilles Band of Lake Superior Chippewas/Lac du Flambeau Chippewa/Lac Vieux Desert Chippewa Tribe/Leech Lake Chippewa Tribe/Little River Band of Ottawa Indians/Little Traverse Bay Bands of Odawa Indians/Louden Village Council/Manokotak Village Council/Manzanita Band of Mission Indians/Marshall Traditional Council/Mashantucket Pequot Tribe/McGrath Native Village Council/Menominee Indian Tribe/Mentasta Tribal Council/Mescalero Apache/Miccosukee Tribe/Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians/Modoc Tribe of Oklahoma/Morongo Band of Mission Indians/Nambe Pueblo/Nanawalek IRA Council/Narragansett Tribe/Native Village of Atka/Native Village of Barrow/Native Village of Deering/Native Village of Eklutna/Native Village of Elm/Native Village of Eyak/Native Village of Fort Yukon/Native Village of Goodnews Bay Traditional Council/Native Village of Kotzebue/Native Village of Kwinhagak/Native Village of Mekoryuk/Native Village of Shaktoolik/Native Village of Shishmaref/Native Village of St. Michael/Native Village of Wales/Native Village of White Mountain/Navajo Nation/Nenana Native Council/Nez Perce Tribe/Nightmute Traditional Council/Ninilchik Traditional Council/North Fork Mono Rancheria/Northern Cheyenne Tribe/Notawaseppi Huron Band of Potawatomi/Nulato Tribal Council/Oglala Sioux Tribe/Ojibway 1850 Treaty Council/Oneida Indian Nation/Oneida Tribe of Indians/Organized Village of Keweenaw/Osage Nation/Ottawa Tribe of Oklahoma/Passamaquoddy Tribe/Pedro Bay Village Council/Penobscot Indian Nation/Picayune Rancheria of Chukchansi Indians/Pilot Point Traditional Council/Pilot Station Traditional Council/Poarch Band of Creek Indians/Pokagon Band of Potawatomi Indians/Ponca Tribe of Nebraska/Port Gamble S'Klallam Tribe/Prairie Band of Potawatomi Nation/Pueblo of Acoma/Pueblo of Cochiti/Pueblo of Isleta/Pueblo of Jemez/Pueblo of Laguna/Pueblo of Pajarito/Pueblo of San Ildefonso/Pueblo of Santa Ana/Pueblo of Santa Clara/Pueblo of Bos/Pueblo of Esque/Pueblo of Zia/Pueblo of Zuni/Pyramid Lake Paiute Tribe/Qawalangin Tribe of Unalaska/Quapaw Tribe/Qugan'iyagangin Tribe/Quileute Tribe/Rainy River Band/Red Cliff Band of Lake Superior Chippewas/Red Lake Band of Chippewa Indians/Redwood Valley Little River Band of Pomo Indians/Salt River Pima-Mari Copia Indian Community/San Carlos Apache Tribe/San Pasqual Band of Indians/Santee Sioux Tribe of Nebraska/Santo Domingo Tribe/Sault Ste. Marie Chippewa Band/Scotts Valley Band of Pomo Indians/Seminole Tribe/Seneca-Cayuga Tribe/Shoalwater Bay/Shoshone-Bannock Tribes/Shoshone-Paiute Tribe of Duck Valley/Shuswap Nation/Sisseton-Wahpeton Sioux Tribe/Sitka Tribe of Alaska/Six Nations of Canada/Soboba Band of Mission Indians/Southern Ute Tribe/Spirit Lake Sioux Tribe/Spokane Tribe/Squaxin Island Tribe/St. Croix Tribal Council/St. Regis Mohawk Tribe/Standing Rock Sioux Tribe/Swinomish Tribal Community/Stevens Village Council/Stillaquamish Tribe/Summit Lake Paiute Tribe/Swinomish Tribal Council/Sinana Tribal Council/Three Affiliated Tribes/Tingit & Haida Central Council/Tihono'Oodham Nation/Tibal Government of St. Paul/Tsawwassen Indian Band/Tirolumne-Me-Wuk Tribal Council/Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa Indians/Ugaskik Traditional Village/Unga Tribal Council/Upper Sioux Community/Ute Indian Tribe/Ute Mountain Ute Tribe/Walker River Paiute Tribe/Wampanoag Tribe of Gay Head/White Earth Reservation of Minnesota/White Mountain Apache Tribe/Wichita & Affiliated Tribes/Winnemago Tribe of Nebraska/Wakuta/Tingit Tribe/Wankton Sioux Tribe/Wapapai-Apache Nation/Wyeta Del Sur Pueblo/Yupit of Adrealski/Yurok Tribe

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*Thank you to the following people for contributing to our publication:*

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*Patrick Durham, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service*

*Alan Veasey & Brooke Martin, University of Alabama*

*Mark Patrick, Mississippi Band of Choctaw*

*Pete Kruger, Squaxin Island Natural Resources*

*Tim Vosburgh, Chippewa-Cree Natural Resources*

## FROM THE EAGLE'S NEST

Is a communication tool to inform and facilitate the exchange of NAFWS news and information nationally, including Canada. We seek relevant information from our members and others who are interested. However, at times we do have limitations, so please understand if we should select another vehicle for your valued information.

# EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

by: Ira New Breast, NAFWS

Hello Everyone,

For the 2005 year to date, the Society has enjoyed several conferences and welcomes new Board Directors along the way. There have been a number of trainings made available and programs have experienced renewed funding.

At this writing, the National Environmental Awareness Summer Youth Practicum (SYP) is on its way. The counselor staff is arriving and the first SYP students are expected. Sally Carufel-Williams is of course busily tying loose ends before the start of the practicum to make this year's event another success.

The Great Plains Region held their regional conference in Rapid City, South Dakota on February 22-24, 2005. The sessions and other events went well. Ron Skates was re-elected as one of the two Great Plains Board of Directors, and Julie Thorntson was elected as the alternate. Next year's event is targeted for the month of February 2006 in Bismarck, North Dakota.

The Alaska Region held its regional conference in Anchorage, Alaska on March 16-17, 2005. Angela Wade from the Chickaloon Village was re-elected to the Board and Craig Fleener with the Council of Athabaskan Tribal Governments was selected as an alternate. The Alaska region anticipates to hold their next conference in Fairbanks, Alaska in the month of March 2006. The conference enjoyed many participants from the area as well as members from the interior of Alaska. The Society's Tribal Water Quality Training Program conducted its training to coincide with the conference.



Of course as many know, the Society National Conference was hosted by the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians at the Pearl River Resort and Casino in Choctaw, Mississippi. At the Board of Directors meeting which precedes the conference, a new board director from the Great Lakes Region, Corey Strong from the Bois Forte Indian Reservation was inducted to the Board. Corey replaces Faith Mc Gruther of Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan. New Board Directors, Marilyn Ethelbah of the White Mountain Apache Tribe from the Southwest and Mark Patrick of the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians from the Southeast await confirmation at the Fall Tele-conference Board meeting. Marilyn will fill the chair of Joe Graham of Laguna Pueblo, and Mark will take on the post from Greg Tubby of Mississippi Choctaw.

By publication of this issue of the 'Nest', the Southwest Region should have conducted their conference at White Mountain Apache, Hon-Dah Resort & Casino and Conference Center at Pinetop, Arizona. Conference dates were August 1-4, 2005. Hon-Dah Resort resides in a beautiful location, the region's agenda is full of good sessions and events. I expect that the conference enjoyed a great success.

The Northeast Region has scheduled to hold their regional conference in Charlestown, Rhode Island this year. It will be hosted by the Narragansett Indian Tribe. The scheduled dates will be September 12-14, 2005. So close to so much lobsters and other good sea food, I'm confident that all of the planned activities will be a winner event.

The Great Lakes Region will hold their regional conference on September 19-22, 2005. The Red Lake Band of Chippewa Indians will host the event at the Seven Clans Hotel Water Park and Casino at Three River Falls, Minnesota. The conference will focus on fish population and habitat restoration, wildlife management and environmental protection.

The Pacific Region will be hosted by the Colville Tribe. The conference will be held at the Okanogan Inn, in Omak Washington, October 16-20, 2005. Sessions will surround fishery management, and preview many of the region's wildlife grants and BPA projects.

Please visit our website or call to receive a copy of current agendas and to take advantage of the many informative sessions and presentations being offered at all the region conferences.

The CWD (Chronic Wasting Disease) project is still moving along at a fast pace. More than 500 tribal individuals have gone through the CWD training, and more than 190 tribes have been visited. Most of these contacts have occurred in the endemic disease area. The project anticipates renewed funding and will look to play an active role in this year's 2005 fall hunting season. To date, two tribes, the Mescalero Apache of New Mexico and the Oneida Tribe of New York are experiencing CWD positive cervids near their borders. Research and development has identified and characterized many parameters of the

epidemiology, still much more has to be accomplished to deal with this wildlife disease. The Society CWD project will maintain its services nationally for the upcoming year.

The Alaska Tribal Water Quality Training program had a bleak period when funding looked dubious, but funds did come forth due to the hard work of our Alaska staff. The project will look forward to one more year of training for FY 2006.

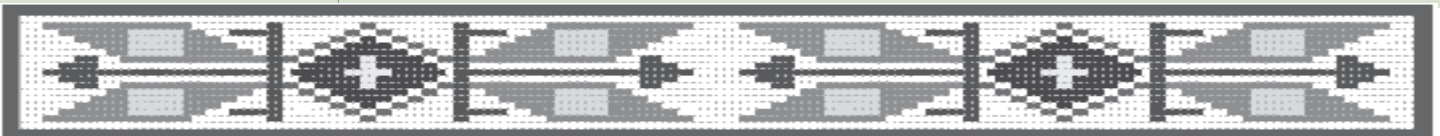
The Great Plains hosted a Conservation Law Enforcement training in Bozeman June 6-10, 2005. Attendees came from five of our Society regions, 40 in all. Hats-off to the training instructors who came from the USFWS Law Enforcement branch offices Region 6, NCTC (National Conservation Training Center) Instructors, Montana State Conservation officers and U.S. Department of Justice Trial Lawyers Wildlife and Marine Resources section. Of course, our own Ron Skates was the architect of the event.

Conservation Law Enforcement sessions are planned during the Southwest Regional conference and later in the year, or early next year 2006, another 40-hour training will be available. Keep posted on the web or contact Ron Skates.

Lastly for this edition, I'd like to thank Faith Mc Gruther for her service with the Society Board of Directors. Faith has served for more than 10 years and has expressed that service with dedication, commitment and honor. She has been pivotal in the Society and has served her region tirelessly making operations there flow easily year-to-year. We look forward to seeing Faith at the regional conferences and hopefully will get to visit with her at the nationals. Thank you Faith, your presence on the Board will be dearly missed.

Take care, and good luck in your coming hunting season.

IRA



# THE 2<sup>ND</sup> INTERNATIONAL CHRONIC WASTING DISEASE SYMPOSIUM

by: Laurie Montour, NAFWS CWD Project

The NAFWS-CWD staff were present to learn about the latest discoveries, further evidence confirming theories, and new approaches to detect, minimize and ultimately eradicate *Chronic Wasting Disease* (CWD) in wild and captive herds of deer and elk. We also had the opportunity to showcase our successes and lessons learned from our experiences.

Keeping us company were Narcisse Rousseau from Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe in South Dakota and their

biologist, Joanne Murray; along with Jim Pardilla from Penobscot Nation in Maine, with their tribal wildlife biologist Kristen Dilworth. Because the Cheyenne River Sioux have a CWD Program they are particularly careful of introduction since they also have a captive elk herd. The National Wildlife Health Centre considers their CWD Surveillance Strategy "the best in Indian Country". They graciously allowed NAFWS to provide copies of that strategy as a sample to other tribes when we conduct training around the country. The

(See next column -)

(mountain goats - from p. 1 -)

declines, and 4) procuring funding for other cause-effect analyses projects.

## PROJECT BUDGET AND EXPENDITURES

A project expenditure ledger, prepared on May 9, 2005 indicates that project expenditures to date are \$39,714. The largest portion of project expenses to date is contract work by WDFW (collar purchase, capture, and flight time) and WWU (GPS collar bias correction work and habitat model development). Combined, these contract expenditures total \$27,677. Other expenditures include SSIT salaries and fringe (\$1,017), supplies (\$146), minor equipment (\$1,172), mileage/fuel (\$142), professional services (\$4,350), dues and subscriptions (\$295), and indirect (\$4,855).

In year two of this grant (May 17, 2005-May 17, 2006), it is anticipated that the WDFW and WWU contracts will be exhausted. As other grant sources supporting SSIT staff on this project dwindle, TWG funding for SSIT salaries and fringe will be drawn down significantly in year 2.

## TIMELINE AND PROJECT OUTLOOK

SSIT staff looks at the second year of implementing this project with great excitement. We will be fully staffed and mostly trained going into the field season. We have been successful in procuring additional (albeit small) grant funding for specific "cause-effect" projects that complement the habitat modeling work as it enters the final stages. While continuing to collect important baseline data for the aerial survey efficiency evaluation, activities in year two of this grant will include collating and assessing historical goat population and distribution data and work toward developing specific management actions and a plan for implementing them with our project partners. There is also lots of work to be done in the way of improving our outreach efforts within the tribal community, and improving the level of understanding, guidance, and input for the wildlife work the environmental department is pursuing on their behalf.

Penobscots are where NAFWS was about a year and a half ago: APHIS funding provided, yet with need to learn skills to collect deer and moose samples for testing. Maine is known for *moose*. Less than a year ago, testing on a moose in captivity provided evidence of the previously unheard of: the disease jumping from the original elk in the 1960's, to deer, and now to moose. For whatever reason, diseases may become used to being in certain animals, but they transfer with much difficulty to another species, so are known as *species barriers*. For example, dogs do not get the common cold that affects humans every winter — that species barrier has not yet been crossed from humans to dogs, although rabies is an example of another disease that can transfer from animals such as dogs to humans.

This opportunity allowed for Native American participants to share our common

(See next column -)

experiences and to try finding ways of resolving what seems to be one of the biggest challenges: getting cervid heads from our own hunters.

Unlike states which can legally compel hunters to provide heads for testing, or with state-run hunter check point stations, first access to donations by Native hunters who may use them, it seems that our tribal technicians spend a lot of time and effort wooing and encouraging hunters to provide heads. That one additional effort on the part of a weary hunter may be the reason for numerous samples or a mere handful.

Some tribes are able to afford monetary incentives, although this does not always work either. In one case, a tribal incentive program yielded half a dozen samples from as many tribal communities during a whole hunting season.

(see p. 6 - CWD -)

## NORTHEAST REGION NEWS

Chief of Penobscot Nation named as Chairman of the National Tribal Environmental Council (NTEC).

Penobscot Nation Chief Jim Sappier was unanimously elected as Chairman of the National Tribal Environmental Council at the annual NTEC Conference recently held in Oneida Wisconsin. Chief Sappier helped create the organization in 1991 during an earlier term as Chief of the Penobscot Tribe. The organization was created to help protect and preserve Native American Homelands. NTEC's membership currently consists of 182 Tribes.

## SOUTHEAST REGION UPDATE

The Southeast regional held a business meeting on May 24, 2005 at the National conference. At that time we had not planned to have Regional conference this year. But we are looking in to the possibility of holding a fall conference. We will notify the region as soon as we know the place and dates.

During of elections, Mark Patrick of Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians was elected Regional Director. Mark was a great help in the planning and

also during the National Conference.

Greg Tubby decided to step down as Director instead of waiting until the next National conference. Mark Patrick will be installed at the next Board meeting.

Submitted by Teresa Harris-Auten

# LAW ENFORCEMENT TRAINING WELL ATTENDED

Submitted by: Ron Skates, USFWS, Bozeman, MT

The Tribal Conservation Law Enforcement training was conducted this year on June 6-10, 2005 in Bozeman, Montana. This training was a joint effort sponsored by the Native American Fish and Wildlife Society and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Since the training began in 1997, we have conducted 15 training sessions in four different regions of the Society. Over the course of that period, training has been provided to 574 Conservation Officers, representing more than 150 tribes.

This year, 39 conservation officers from 24 different tribes encompassing 5 regions of the Society, attended the popular training. As always we have more requests than we are able to take. The focus this year was on preparing a case for courtroom testimony. The course covered techniques associated with interviewing and interrogation. Participants interviewed actual informants

(role played by high school drama students) to seek information and begin the development of their case. Since it would have been impossible for each participant to do every one of these tasks the group was divided into four teams and each team designated individuals to conduct certain aspects of the case while the rest observed.

From that information, they identified where the crime scene was located. They were given the responsibility of finding the site and conducting the investigation of the area, complete with photographs and the collection of items at the site for further forensics analysis. They were also given instruction on how to properly prepare a report, which included search warrant preparation, raid planning, and take downs. It was interesting to watch the teams take on their responsibility and the competition to be the best was apparent. Many of the participants put in long hours into the night putting their case together, which was evaluated by the instructors on the last

day. The best team was given a special law enforcement engraved folding knife.

On Friday, the group had the opportunity to listen and interact with Robert Anderson, Trail Attorney with the U.S. Department of Justice concerning the proper techniques of giving professional courtroom testimony. The moral of the story was to be precise and terse with answers. Talking more than necessary is not productive, and can often lose a case for you.

At closing, certificates and awards were presented and all seemed to walk away with something, including the friendships and camaraderie that were developed among the group.

A course evaluation was given to each of the participants to solicit feedback about the training. Each one of them filled out the evaluation and according to the group, this was one of the best trainings yet. It is evident that we know what is needed and we will try to accommodate their remarks to improve future trainings.

A big thank you goes out to all the people who made this training possible. Special thank you to all the instructors who gave great presentations and took time out of their busy schedules to participate. And lastly, thanks to the Tribes for supporting their representatives that were able to attend.

Those that attended were: Wilbur Calf Robe; Greg Gilham; (See p. 6 - LE training -)



Ron Skates and Dominci Domenici hand out certificates to class participants for completing the training.



Group photo of the 39 tribal law enforcement officers that participated in the training held in Bozeman, Montana in June.



Ron Skates (right), and Ira New Breast (left), present Robert St. Clair with the Top Gun award he earned at the NAFWS national shoot competition.

(- CWD - Cont. from p. 4-)

## Arbitrary Highlights from 64 Sessions

The conference was well-rounded. Information was shared about the disease at the microscopic level all the way to its impacts on whole herds of deer and elk. Then the human dimensions, official and non-official. There were many discussions about the human health implications. While there is still no evidence of contacting the disease from eating meat or handling the parts of the animal with the highest likelihood of finding the disease, identifying the risk factors to humans and minimizing exposure to those critical parts is still the safest way to avoid any risk that may be discovered in the future.

### Transmission of CWD

There is no antidote to stop the disease once an animal acquires it – the animal dies. The incubation period prior to the classic outward physical symptoms include: droopy ears and head, drooling, blank look, rough coat and starvation which ranges at least 1½ to 2 years before death. However, there is new evidence of certain elk having a gene that suggests incubation time of the

through the body. The prions make it down the throat entering the retropharyngeal lymph nodes, then down to the gastrointestinal tract where some of it is excreted, and some enters the spinal cord. The spinal cord ends at the obex, which is the entry way to the brain. As an aside, the NAFWS - CWD project collects the lymph nodes and the obex to test for CWD – to be doubly sure. Some states take only one tissue sample.

### We Like Wolves

In an about-face from human-induced herd reduction to stop the spread of disease – in an approach that can be summed up as “Kill ‘em all”, one of the oldest and certainly more natural approaches to herd reduction is **wolf control**.

Wolves, the ancestors of our biologically diverse canines, do not seem to acquire CWD. A wolf pack needs large amounts of meat for survival – a half-ton elk would serve the purpose well. In addition, wolves can:

- Selectively remove those CWD suspects – the sick and vulnerable animals;
- Stabilize or reduce deer population densities in deer-thick regions, thereby reducing the spread of the disease; and

- Remove infected carcasses from the environment.

The work completed so far by the National Parks Service, Colorado Division of Wildlife, and Colorado State University to determine the success of wolves in reducing CWD shows much promise.

### Disposal of carcass

So we learn that one of our donated elk samples comes back positive. The hunter had already practiced safe butchering utilizing: safe gloves; bone out meat; avoid brain, spinal cord and nerve tissue including lymph nodes scattered throughout the body to minimize any potential human health risk – not that there are any documented at this time.

Some states having CWD in wild populations already have arrangements to destroy contaminated material through chemical digestion and incineration. The CWD hotspot in southern Wisconsin has generated over a million pounds of deer carcass waste in its three years of testing. Although the final product is de-natured, or neutralized, public perception has prevented the disposal of the

final product to some landfills. One of the NAFWS goals this year is to formalize carcass disposal sites in the event a CWD+ carcass comes from one of the tribes participating in this project.

(- LE training, Cont. from p. 5-)

Kevin Vaile; Robert E. Carolin; Mike Kennedy; Jack Slidesoff; Mark Patrick; Jason Aspa; Daniel Martinez; Sylvan B. Covers Up; Cody Wilhelm; Scott Crozier; Terry Mooney; Everett Erdahl; Dale Goodreau; Michael McCreary; Kevin Willis; Sheldon Fletcher; Jay Jandreau; Francis Big Crow; Travis Brave Bird, Jr.; Monty Matlock; Kelton Kersey; Al Duran; Travis Vigil; Timothy Stevens; Jerald Thompson, Sr.; Belinda Paxton; Dominic Bau; Robert Espinosa; Rawlin Friday, Sr.; Dennis O’Neal; Ben Snyder, Jr.; Robert St. Clair; Western Thayer; Ben Warren III; Preston Washakie; Paul St. Pierre; and Larry Olson.



## CHOCTAWS HOST NATIONAL CONFERENCE

The 23rd annual National Conference of the Native American Fish & Wildlife Society was hosted by the Southeast Region of the NAFWS and co-hosted by the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians. It was held at the Silver Star Casino in May 2005.

Attendance this year reached 172 tribal and non-tribal natural resource managers, fish and wildlife technicians, conservation law enforcement officers, tribal government representatives, and government agencies.

The conference theme,

“Partnerships: Discovering the New; Renewing the Old” brought focus and a central topic for presenters.

The conference theme of Partnerships was acknowledged by Delbert Wapass, Vice Chief of the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations which represents 74 First Nations in Saskatchewan, Canada. He said the U.S. and Canada need to work together in partnerships to seek opportunities on behalf of families and communities while maintaining a connection to the land and natural

resources.

The Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations works to honour the Spirit and intent of the Treaties as well as to promote, protect and implement the Treaties made

with the First Nations more than a century ago.

Conference attendees were welcomed by the Executive Assistant of the Chief

(-see p. 7- national conference-)



Opening ceremony of the conference. While the Caney Drum Group sings, tribal law enforcement officers wait to begin the opening session of the conference.

( - national conf. - cont. from p. 6 - )

of the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians, Gilbert Thompson. The opening keynote address was given by Sam Hamilton, Southeast Region, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service who highlighted one of the partnerships they have with the Mississippi Band of Choctaws at the Noxubee Refuge. (see Hamilton's keynote address on p. 9 in this newsletter).

A session by Doug Harris, Historic Preservation Officer, Narragansett Tribal Historic Preservation Program discussed the importance and responsibility of tribes to protect their traditional cultural practices and ceremonies, posing the question, "What will we pass on to our great grandchildren as to who we are"?

Daniel Parker, the 2005 recipient of the Chief Seattle award, and a member of the White Mountain Apache Tribe said it was good hearing this topic about cultural preservation given by Doug Harris, "It is so important to keep our cultural ways intact and to me, that really makes sense. It was good to hear."

This year's traditional feast featured barbecued meat that conservation officers brought in from the hog hunt, chicken, hominy, beans and fry bread.

Other events included the annual conservation law officers shoot competition in which five regional shoot teams participated. The Great Lakes Region shoot team scored 8359 winning the competition. The team members are: Bill Bailey, Bill Schofield, Terry Carrick, Corey Strong, and Terry Metoxen. The Great Plains team won second place with an overall score of 8348. And the Southwest team took third place with an overall score of 8256. The Top Gun award this year was Robert St. Claire, a game warden at the Shoshone Tribe of Wyoming.

Conference sessions were: Government-to-Government Relations; Wildlife Management on the Yakama Indian Reservation; Conservation of Freshwater Mussels & Water

Quality; TWG & TLIP Update; Wildlife Habitat Projects at Acoma Pueblo; Sturgeon Restoration at Lac du Flambeau; Restoration of Raymond "Snooty" Couture Fish Hatchery & Rearing Ponds, Rocky Boys Wildlife Enhancement Program; Coho Reintroduction into Columbia Basin; APHIS programs; Chronic Wasting Disease; Tribal Hatchery Operations, Environmental Issues, Urbanization & Erosion Problems, Choctaw Tribal Forestry; Intertribal Nursery Camps of the Southeast Native People; and Partnerships.

The annual banquet and auction was held and the Choctaw Tribe showed-off their success in sports with a video which showcased the high school girls basketball team that has won in state tournaments.

A field trip and tour of the reservation, enterprises, and tribal offices was conducted. And an additional tour included the Nanih Wayia Mound that was erected at least 1,000 years ago and "is likely the mother mound referred to in Choctaw legends." Mounds were usually erected in the center of a "fortified village."

One of the highlights of the conference was the hog hunt sponsored by the Choctaw Wildlife and Parks Department. At least 12-15 conservation law officers participated in several hunts that took place throughout the conference. (See story on page 8).

Next year, the Northeast Region hosts the 2006 National NAFWS conference to be held in Bar Harbor, Maine.



A local drum group from Choctaw, MS called Caney Creek Drum group sang during the opening ceremony of the conference.

Exhibitors, Lotek Wireless from Ontario, Canada talk with conference attendees.



During the traditional feast, members of the Choctaw reservation performed traditional dances for the members of the NAFWS.

A Canadian delegation came to Choctaw for the conference. "In the future, we'd like to host this national conference," they said. (L - R): Delbert Wapass, Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations (FSIN); Glen Pratt, Chief, George Gordan First Nation; and Alfred Quewezance of the FSIN.



Southeast Region Board directors Mark Patrick (left) and Teresa Harris-Auten, pose here with Gilbert Thompson (right), Executive Assistant to the Chief of the Mississippi Band of Choctaws.

# HOG HUNT ATTRACTS THE ADVENTUROUS

by Karen Lynch, Native American Fish & Wildlife Society

At five a.m. on the morning of May 22, at Choctaw, Mississippi, and an anxious, curious, adventurous group of hunters await in front of the Golden Moon casino/hotel to go on a wild hog hunt. For these hunters, it would be a first-time ever type of hunt.

To sponsor a wild hog hunt was an idea that the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Wildlife and Parks Department came up with, as hosts of the 2005 National Conference of the Native American Fish & Wildlife Society, co-sponsored by the Mississippi Band of Choctaws said tribal game warden, Mark Patrick, who served as a guide for the hunts.

"For most of these tribal hunters representing regions of the U.S., this was a unique experience. Especially, for those not used to our swamp environment of water, bogs, snakes and alligators," said Patrick smiling, "I guess this is what made these hunts interesting and exciting."

He added, "Now, if I were to go to their tribal land and hunt in the Northwest, Great Lakes, or Great Plains, I'm sure I would encounter a whole different experience too."

Avid hunter, Pete Kruger, from Squaxin Island Tribe in Washington praised hunt guides, Mark Patrick and Greg Tubby from the Choctaw Wildlife and

Parks Department who were "not only great to work with, but they knew the area well and provided us with a safe hunting experience."

Also a veteran big game hunter from the Northwest, Dell Brown, a Spokane Tribal conservation officer said not knowing anything about hunting in that area and those types of conditions was very new to him. "For one, I wasn't even planing to go but at last minute was persuaded. I really didn't know what to expect. In a way, it was crazy," he added.

"I didn't know what to expect either," said Ron Skates, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service employee and Cheyenne River Sioux tribal member, who also hunts for big game in Montana, "except that it was a very different and quite adventurous experience."

"First of all, I've never hunted in that type of habitat. It was very warm and muggy. The excitement was a constant awareness of seeing snakes or crocodiles. In that ghostly-like atmosphere, it was weird because we could only hear sounds, and its our guess that it was a hog moving around in the timber."

As this group headed towards the murky waters of the nearby Pearl River to the location where the hunt was to take place, they unload and begin walking, some on foot and others with the ATV ride provided by the guides.

Kruger, who chose to stay near the ATV, said he was hoping not to encounter any snakes. He continued, "Well — we did see a big one, a Water moccasin, one of the guys shot it. There was also a young alligator nearby."

"As I waited, bird sounds were everywhere — hawks, owls or other birds was all that I could hear, it was just beginning to get light. Then before I knew it, I heard gun shots."

Consequently, Dell Brown had been nearby and said with a laugh, "I heard oink, oink, oink, and a group of hogs were standing near a pond. As I shot one of them with a .357 S & W magnum, it flipped on its side while kicking and squealing. Its legs went straight up in the air and I shot it again. This time in the neck and again in the leg. After shooting it, the sow was also screaming."

By that time, another hunter, Tom Doolittle, Bad River Natural Resources Department, must have heard the gun shots and hurried over. "He took a shot at it with his 30-06 rifle and killed it," added Brown.

The small hog probably weighed less than 50 lbs. It was skinned and cleaned, then sent to the cooler and prepared for the traditional feast later on that evening said Kruger. "All this took place within less than one hour, I would say—the hunt."

Several hunting trips were made throughout the week of this conference. Each group had a different experience. Some experienced seeing no hogs and others shot at hogs but missed or they escaped.

Tim Vosburgh, a wildlife biologist at the Chippewa-Cree Tribe was one of participants that went each day on the hunts.

"It was on the third day that I harvested a small hog using a large caliber rifle that was borrowed. Like all the other guys, I too did not know much about wild hogs before these hunts at Choctaw. I was surprised at the large amount of sign such as tracks, wallows, scat, etc., which I observed being out there."

"These hogs are not a native species to our lands," said Patrick, "they actually compete with deer for acorns, then they take-over resulting in deer not being able to find food. Their dominant nature makes them a difficult animal to hunt. Within the past 35 years or so, they have become a nuisance. They not only populate fast but intrude onto residential areas and backyards causing damage."

Vosburgh added that although they are disruptive to a forest ecosystem, and as a biologist, "I think the opportunity exists for the Choctaw Tribe to conduct population assessments through using mark resighting techniques or radio telemetry efforts."

According to Mississippi State University Agriculture Department, the key to managing established, wild hog populations is aggressive hunting to keep populations in check. The most effective hunting method involves trained hunting dogs.

As a hunter for years in Mississippi, Mark Patrick agreed. "Because their patterns are hard to follow, unlike deer or elk, we have to use dogs in our hunts. We specifically use a Curr dog which easily tracks them. What they do is pick up their trail and run'em and run'em. It's more

(See p. 15 - hog hunt -)



Dale Brown (left, Spokane conservation officer and Mark Patrick, Mississippi Band of Choctaw Wildlife and Parks department, after the hunt display their catch of the day.



These group of hunters were one of several groups that went out on the hunting trips during the conference. Of these seven hunters, only four are identifiable beginning in the middle, or fourth person from the left, Bill Bailey, Terry Carrick, Thomas Doolittle, and Tim Vosburgh.

# AFTER TWO YEARS, WE ARE SEEING BENEFITS TO TRIBES

## TWG AND TLIP GRANTS ARE MAKING IT POSSIBLE FOR TRIBES TO PLAN AND RESEARCH FOR CONSERVING NATURAL RESOURCES

*Editor's Note: Sam Hamilton, Region 4 Director of the Southeast Region of the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (USFWS) gave a keynote address during the 2005 National Conference of the Native American Fish & Wildlife Society meeting in Choctaw, Mississippi on May 23. His address follows:*

Members of the Native American Fish & Wildlife Society, it is an honor to be here to address this important gathering and to welcome each one of you to my home state of Mississippi. First, it is always a pleasure for me to speak with fellow fish and wildlife managers who share my commitment to natural resources and have committed themselves to careers conserving fish, wildlife and habitats. We gather here today as colleagues who together will look for ways to ensure a strong future for America's natural resource heritage.

Beyond that, as a native of Mississippi, I am proud that you will have the opportunity to enjoy the state's amazing fish and wildlife resources and natural beauty. This state inspired me to pursue a career in biology and wildlife management and gave me the first opportunity to test out that commitment. I began my career with the USFWS, Youth Conservation Corps at Noxubee National Wildlife Refuge just up the road. Today, Noxubee stands as a fine example of Service field stations that enjoy a very collaborative relationship with neighboring Tribes, in this case, the Mississippi Band of Choctaw. The USFWS has come a very long way since my student days in recognizing the sovereignty of Tribes and in reaching out to Tribes as partners.

Today, Noxubee Refuge and the Mississippi Band of Choctaw serve as a prime example of the close working relationships and true partnerships that are possible between the USFWS and Tribes. This thriving relationship is focused on youth, our nation's future, and includes natural resource education and stewardship opportunities for

more than 50 young people each year.

As you know, the USFWS adopted a Native American Policy in 1994, which lays out some core principles for our staff to incorporate into their work. We have done much to implement these principles, particularly in the last three years. Today, I'd like to talk with you about some of the areas in which we have made great strides.

There are 565 Federally recognized tribes at present, 227 of them in Alaska alone. Tribes manage more than 100 million acres of land, 40 million in Alaska, compared to 96 million acres that comprise the National Wildlife Refuge System managed by the USFWS. Ironically, despite Tribes owning and having responsibility for more land than the nation's Refuge System, Tribes have historically been excluded from many state and Federal programs, including those focused on fish and wildlife management.

I am thankful for all of our sakes that this is changing. With the implementation of two Federal grant programs for Tribes, which we'll discuss in a moment, the Service is beginning to understand the vast resources, capabilities and needs in Indian Country and the many opportunities for partnership between us.

The irony of your exclusion from many Federal programs, however, has been that there remain on Indian reservations vast tracts of pristine, undeveloped land, which are a boon to wildlife. It is not an accident that the last active family of one of the most endangered mammals in the world, the black-footed ferret, found its refuge on an Indian reservation, at Ft. Belknap, Montana.

The importance of the existence of large tracts of undisturbed lands, such as are found in Indian Country and in National Wildlife Refuges, to the survival of wildlife species in America was brought home to

us this month with the rediscovery of the Ivory-billed Woodpecker at 65,000-acre Cache River National Wildlife Refuge in Arkansas.

As biologists and wildlife managers, we know that the ongoing development of land for various human uses has had a huge price for many fish and wildlife resources in America, among them, this largest woodpecker in the United States.

I have to tell you that for the Service, as the agency responsible for implementing the Endangered Species Act, the rediscovery of the Ivory-billed woodpecker after a 60-year absence of even one confirmed sighting and a presumption of extinction has rocked our world. I'm not anticipating that anything more exciting than this will happen in the course of my career.

The Southeast Region of the USFWS is going to play a leadership role in the multi-partner effort to recover the bird. We've just launched a website, [www.fws.gov/ivorybill/](http://www.fws.gov/ivorybill/) for anyone who wants to follow the progress of recovery planning and implementation, and we welcome your involvement.

But beneath all the excitement, this rediscovery has a symbolic meaning that goes to the heart of all that we do and all that we are as conservationists. This find reminds us that we should never give up hope.

No matter how large the task of protecting or recovering a species may seem, no matter how few the resources we have to work with, just at the point we want to throw-in the towel, believing that what we are doing isn't amounting to anything - just at that moment, something amazing and unexpected can happen. Like a fellow who loves birds kayaking down the Cache River and looking up to see the long-lost Ivory-billed Woodpecker right before his eyes.

This is the miracle of the natural world that sustains us when all other hope fails. The persistence of these wildlife in

spite of everything that we humans have done to wipe them off the face of the earth is a lesson to us as conservationists about the importance of hanging in there, of continuing to believe that what we do matters. We simply cannot give up hope, because what we are fighting for, abundant fish, wildlife, and habitats for our children and grandchildren to use and enjoy, is simply too important.

That thought we need to cling to when we are dealing with our daily realities, so many of which seem to focus around money, specifically, the need for it and the lack of it.

### FUNDING

I have to say that I'm really proud that one of the key ways we've improved in our ability to partner with Tribes is in the area of funding. As you know, we are now in our third year administering two grant

programs - the Tribal Landowner Incentive Program and Tribal Wildlife Grants Program.

In the first two years, we funded 132 projects, making more than \$24 million available to Tribes. For the FY05 proposals currently under review, Congress has made just over \$8 million available for these two programs. While this is less funding than in the two previous years, I think it is important to put the cuts into context of what is happening to Federal budgets across the board at the present time.

I will tell you that these decreases are in line with the targeted budget cuts that many of our fish and wildlife conservation programs are facing. Having said that, let me also add that I know how much this money means to you in carrying out your conservation mission, which in most governments and organizations is a chronically under-funded activity.

As we are now beginning to close out some of the grants from the first two years, we are seeing the many benefits of these programs for Tribes.

For example, this funding is making it possible for many Tribes to inventory the natural  
(See page 14- benefits)



I was happy to see so many of you at the national conference this year at the Mississippi Choctaw Reservation. It was a pleasure to introduce you all to the new Liaison in the Southeast Region, Kyla Hastie. Another recent bit of news, our Liaison in Alaska, Tony DeGange, will be moving on to a new position as the Chief of the Biology and Geography Disciplines for the Alaska Science Center of the U.S. Geological Survey.

The 2005 selections for the Tribal Wildlife Grant (TWG) and Tribal Landowner Incentive Programs (TLIP) are currently being approved and I expect to see the public announcement made very soon. At the national conference I promised to provide a summary of how the selection process works which is now posted at <http://www.fws.gov/grants/tribal.html>. With the highly competitive nature of these grant programs and the diversity of tribal resources, it has been difficult to create a system that works. If you are interested in how our process works, please visit the site.

Trend has become obvious as we move forward with these grant programs. The tribes that have established their own fish and wildlife core programs are better able to utilize the funds to accomplish on-the-ground results. That is to say, when staff and base line data are already established, competitive grants such as TWG and TLIP, serve best as a compliment to those programs to initiate special projects.

It is next to impossible for a fish and wildlife program to operate while depending on competitive grants for its base funding. For a tribal program to be the best possible steward of its resources, it needs a permanent funding source so that; 1. institutional memory can be established, 2. permanent staff may be employed and



developed and, 3. long-term conservation goals may be achieved.

One of the greatest impediments that Indian tribes face in gaining support for their fish and wildlife management concerns is that there is no coordinated national representation of tribal governments in this area. For Congress and Federal Executive agencies to make meaningful national policy and legislative changes in the interest of tribal fish and wildlife resources, a true accounting of the resources, needs, concerns, costs and benefits is a necessity.

*'One of the greatest impediments that Indian tribes face in gaining support for their fish and wildlife management concerns is that there is no coordinated national representation of tribal governments in this area.'*

It is incumbent upon tribal leaders to organize their own agenda. State fish and wildlife agencies have been monumentally successful in organizing the International Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (IAFWA) and Indian tribes should follow this lead. Please take a few minutes to look at their web site at <http://www.iafwa.org/>.

An Association of Tribal Fish and Wildlife Agencies (ATFWA) would provide a venue for Indian tribes to meaningfully enter into the national arena of fish and wildlife management policy and law. The brief history and objectives of IAFWA (see inset) demonstrates the power and influence of a unified voice. For Indian tribes to fully realize their fish and wildlife management goals, a similar organizational structure might be the best next step.

What I mean by this is that there are tremendous resources on tribal lands; habitat, threatened endangered plants and animals, invasives, environmental problems, staffing needs, jurisdictional nuances, cultural resources and so on. There are all kinds of reasons to address these issues... political, legislative and, environmental to name a few, but we are not successfully reporting them or demonstrating the benefits of pursuing tribal partnerships.

An organization like an ATFWA could coordinate national tribal agendas to address some of your greatest concerns through proposed legislation, policy development and serving as a public information resource. My objective here is not to tell you what to do but to help in every way possible to get what you want done.

Here's something to consider. If I were tasked with putting something like this together, I might put together a start-up strategy that convened an interim Executive Committee to:

- Develop a concept paper for distribution to all tribal fish and wildlife agencies (including organizations) that

(1) provides information about the importance of establishing ATFWA, (2) proposes infrastructure and, (3) invites administrators to meet;

- This information could be efficiently disseminated through established meetings, media and networks by a small team of volunteers.

An initial meeting might attempt to:

- Articulate the purposes of ATFWA.
- Establish parameters for membership and associate membership.
- Develop a strategy for gaining the support and membership of tribal leadership
- Identify potential partners.
- Establish protocol for accepting organizational agenda items through resolution.
- Establish initial outreach strategies for disseminating ATFWA agenda items.
- Establish an initial organizational structure including necessary staff and/or volunteers, funding needs, funding opportunities, meeting structure, etc.
- Retire the interim Executive Committee.
- Elect a new Executive Committee.
- Propose follow up.

People from all backgrounds I have talked to about this idea seem to think that it makes good sense. For ATFWA to be successful though, the initiative has to come from you - the tribes. If you want to move forward with the concept (or disagree), please shoot me an e-mail at [Pat\\_Durham@FWS.gov](mailto:Pat_Durham@FWS.gov) and I will start helping people to get together. I am proud of all of your accomplishments and am hopeful that you can continue to realize the great potential for tribal governments to shine.

Pat

# CS & K TRIBES REINTRODUCE COLUMBIAN SHARP-TAILED GROUSE

BY: Brett Gullett, CS & K Tribal Wildlife Management Program

On January 27, 2004, Interior Secretary Gale Norton announced that the Confederated Salish & Kootenai Tribes will receive a grant for \$212,050 to develop a Conservation Program for Columbian Sharp-Tailed Grouse.

The Confederated Salish & Kootenai Tribes' successful grant is funded by the new U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service Tribal Wildlife Grant Program (TWG). These funds facilitate the Confederated Salish & Kootenai Tribes to assess the current habitat and develop future restoration and reintroduction efforts.

## What is the Sharp-tailed Grouse

The Columbian Sharp-Tailed Grouse, is an important species to the Salish, Pend O'reille and Kootenai people, and has suffered a tremendous population decline over the past century. This, as a result of conversion of native prairie overgrazing, weed infestation, and unregulated hunting which have played a role in the population declines on the Flathead Indian Reservation.

After early survey efforts and landowner contacts, the last verified observations on the Flathead Indian Reservation occurred west of Ronan, MT in 1980. The species is all but extirpated from Montana; today less than two-dozen wild birds apparently remain in the state.

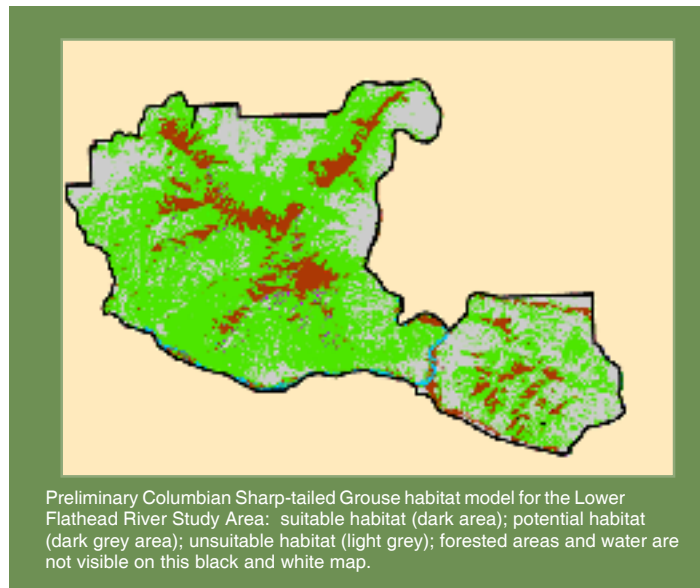
For the Salish, Pend O'reille and Kootenai people, the Columbian Sharp-tailed Grouse (sq'wo or prairie chicken) was once important for subsistence purpose and as a spiritual being. The Tribes have patterned one of their dances after the dance of grouse and Pete Beaverhead, Pend d'Oreille elder, stated in 1975 "...when the Indians here war danced, they would do this *Prairie Chicken dance*. You know there was a lot of prairie chickens around here. I did not think they would become extinct."

Columbian Sharp-Tailed Grouse rely on a mosaic of

habitats throughout the year with population parameters varying in response to winter and breeding habitat quality. Optimum habitat in the mixed-grass prairie of Montana is a mosaic of upland grassland and riparian hardwood draws comprised of deciduous plants like: chokecherry, red-osier dogwood, and aspen. Sharp-tailed grouse are a true lek species: The males defend small territories on traditional "dancing grounds" where they

habitats that Columbian Sharp-Tailed Grouse depend upon. Satellite images will capture differing light reflections of multiple groups of vegetation. These images will be used in geographic information system (GIS) to analyze the amount and spatial arrangement of the multiple vegetation types. Information regarding spatial extent and quality of that habitat will be fed directly into a comprehensive reintroduction plan.

Grasslands systems were marked using multi-temporal (an image from each spring, summer, fall, and winter) 15m ASTER satellite imagery. To prevent errors in classification of the more linear shrub and riparian systems, a 1m IKONOS



try to attract females using distinctive displays. Males stomp on the ground with their tail erect, wings lowered and neck outstretched and producing a drumming sound.

## Purpose for the Tribal Wildlife Grant

This grant marks the beginning of a long road to recovery of Columbian Sharp-Tailed Grouse on the Flathead Indian Reservation. The first step was to assess current habitat to determine if any appropriate habitat remains.

## Methodology

This assessment used sophisticated airborne hyperspectral remote sensing technologies to discriminate

satellite imagery was used to identify the shrub and riparian coverage. These multiple sources were combined and ground-truthed with vegetation data collected across the study area to create a vegetation layer. Visual obstruction readings (VOR), measurements of the amount of hiding capacity for nesting habitat, were collected at multiple sites within the study area. These VOR readings were coupled with a radar image to create a layer demonstrating vegetation cover. These data sources were used as inputs into existing Habitat Suitability Index models to determine the amount and quality of habitat that is available on Flathead Indian Reservation.

(See p. 15 - grouse-)

# NAVAJO OFFERS YOUTH HUNT

By Bill Donovan, The Navajo Times

For years, Navajo government officials have discussed holding a special hunt on the reservation just for kids who never been on a hunt.

Mike Halona, former director of animal control, brought it up and Eddie Benally, a wildlife enforcement official in the Fish & Wildlife Department, picked up the idea.

But the timing was never quite right - until this year.

This fall, for the first time, the tribe is sponsoring a hunt just for youths aged 12-16 who have never hunted before and who don't have the resources to go on their own.

The hunt, scheduled Sept. 30 - Oct 2, offers up to 20 participants the chance to experience an event that old-timers say was once part of every Navajo boy's childhood.

Benally said the youth hunt offers a perfect opportunity for any boy - or girl - to see what it is like to track wildlife, camp out in the woods and eat food cooked over an open fire.

Benally said he got interested in the idea of a youth hunt a couple of years ago when he was doing a sheep survey in the Sheep Springs, N.M., area. A young Navajo boy came up to him and asked if he knew anyone who would take him on a hunting trip.

"He said he really wanted to go on a hunt but he had no one in his family who would take him," Benally said, adding that he would like to find that boy now to invite him along on the upcoming hunt.

Those who are selected will go through a 20-hour hunter education program and will be supplied with a rifle and all of the equipment they need for the expedition.

The group will go to the Carrizo Mountains area in the northern part of the reservation and hunt deer for two days.

Each of the 20 participants

(See page 13 - hunt )

# CALENDAR

**September 12 - 14, 2005 - Northeast Region NAFWS conference**, Charlestown, Rhode Island, hosted by the Narragansett Indian Tribe. For more information: [www.narragansett-tribe.org](http://www.narragansett-tribe.org), or call, (401) 364-1100, ext. 205.

**September 30 - October 6, 2005 - 8th World Wilderness Congress Wilderness, Wildlands and People: A Partnership for the Planet**, Anchorage, Alaska. Join over 1000 delegates from many nations - from all perspectives and professions, Native and non-native communities - at the world's longest-running, public, international environmental forum, and take action on: climate change, forests, science, **traditional knowledge**, wild salmon tourism, marine sanctuaries, public sector agencies, private sector models, native lands & wilderness council, natural resource use & management, conservation, photography, music, writing, dance, and more. visit: [www.8wwc.org](http://www.8wwc.org).

**September 11-15, 2005 - 135th Annual Meeting of the American Fisheries Society**, Anchorage, Alaska. Contact: Betsy Fritz, [bfritz@fisheries.org](mailto:bfritz@fisheries.org).

**September 19 - 22, 2005 - Great Lakes Region NAFWS Conference**, Three River Falls, Minnesota. To be hosted with the Red Lake Band of Chippewa Indians and will be held at the Seven Clans Hotel Water Park and Casino. For more information, Don Reiter, (715) 799-5116, [dreiter@itol.com](mailto:dreiter@itol.com), Corey Strong at (218) 757-3261, ext. 50, [cstrong@rangenet.com](mailto:cstrong@rangenet.com).

**September 25 - 27, 2005 - Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations (FSIN) Lands and Resources Conference**, Saskatoon, Canada. Conference theme, "Only a Matter of (see page 14)

## NAFWS/UAB HAZMAT TRAINING ADDS NEW PROGRAM

by: Brooke Martin, UAB

Hello from the University of Alabama at Birmingham. I hope that your summer is going well and that everyone made it back home safely from the NAFWS 2005 National Conference in Choctaw, Mississippi. UAB enjoyed participating in the conference. I was fortunate to have the opportunity to meet other NAFWS members and to learn from the presentations and gatherings held throughout the conference. Here at UAB we have good news to report regarding our funding from the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences (NIEHS).

In this article I will report on our training grant status, as well as a new course CLEAR is adding to the training program, and how you can take advantage of the training opportunities.

### UAB/NAFWS Training Grant Status

We have received notification of a proposed award from NIEHS and we fully expect the NAFWS/UAB partnership to continue training tribal members and employees. The new grant should allow UAB to continue training throughout the next five years beginning September 1<sup>st</sup>, 2005. Everyone here at CLEAR is excited about our future training opportunities and wish to send thanks to those that provided letters of support. All courses that we currently offer will continue to be available as well as a new course titled Radiological/Nuclear Awareness.

### Radiological/Nuclear Awareness Course Added to Program

What is radiation and why am I concerned about it? Radiation is the transfer of energy through space and matter. There are many natural and man-made sources of radiation. Potassium-40, carbon-14, uranium-235, uranium-238, and tritium are naturally

occurring radioactive isotopes found in the environment. Man-made sources of radiation include tobacco products, medical radiation sources, smoke detectors, welding rods, and x-ray machines for baggage inspection. A major source of radiation is from nuclear reactors. Certain doses of radiation can be harmful to human health and can also cause contamination of the environment. Whether from an unfortunate accident or from an intentional terrorist attack, an emergency event involving radiation could be dangerous and harmful to responders. The Radiological/Nuclear Awareness Course is an 8-hour Office of Domestic Preparedness (ODP) course. The course will be offered to first responders who may encounter radiological or nuclear hazards, whether due to an accident or a terrorist attack. This course will help responders to recognize such an event, avoid exposure to the hazards, and take appropriate defensive actions in response. CLEAR trainers are ODP certified to teach this course and participants will receive certification through ODP. Trainees who may be interested in this course include fire and rescue personnel, police officers, public works employees, and other workers who may be first on the scene following an incident involving radioactive materials.



A semi-truck is shown transporting transuranic nuclear waste to the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant in Carlsbad, New Mexico.

occurring radioactive isotopes found in the environment. Man-made sources of radiation include tobacco products, medical radiation sources, smoke detectors, welding rods, and x-ray machines for baggage inspection. A major source of radiation is from nuclear reactors. Certain doses of radiation can be harmful to human health and can also cause contamination of the environment. Whether from an unfortunate accident or from an intentional terrorist attack, an emergency event involving radiation could be dangerous and harmful to responders.

The Radiological/Nuclear Awareness Course is an 8-hour Office of Domestic Preparedness (ODP) course. The course will be offered to first respond-

The Radiological/Nuclear Awareness course can fill an important need for some tribes. For example, shipments of transuranic radioactive waste from sites all over the U.S. are transported to the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant (WIPP) located in Southeastern New Mexico. According to the U.S. Department of Energy, the transportation routes for the transuranic waste shipments travel through ten Native American reservations. A company called ESRA Corporation conducted a survey of environmental representatives of reservations and pueblos in New Mexico and reported that 70% of the respondents do not feel that

(See next page - UAB Training - )

# WILDLIFE AGENCIES TO INITIATE STATUS REVIEW OF THE AMERICAN EEL

Article by: Heather Bell, Senior Fisheries Biologist and D.J. Monette, Native American Liaison, USFWS, Region 5, Hadley, Massachusetts

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in coordination with the National Marine Fisheries Service has completed its evaluation of the petition to list the American eel as either threatened or endangered under the Endangered Species Act and determined that substantial biological information exists to warrant a more in-depth examination of its status. This finding was published on July 16<sup>th</sup> in the Federal Register.

The only freshwater eel in the Western hemisphere, American eels begin their lives in the mid-Atlantic Sargasso Sea. About a year later, they migrate to freshwater rivers and lakes and coastal areas where they live



for 7 to 30 years. They range from Greenland south along the North American coast to Brazil, and in the U.S. the eel lives inland to the Great Lakes and in the Mississippi River drainage. At maturity, eels return to the Sargasso Sea to spawn and die. Because the eel spends a portion of its life in the marine environment and a portion of its life in freshwater, it falls under the responsibilities of both agencies, so they work together on the issue. For more information about the American eel and the finding, please visit the Fish and Wildlife Service's Web site at <http://northeast.fws.gov/ameel/>

The agencies are now beginning a range-wide status review of the species, and once the review is complete, the Services will if listing the species is appropriate. The agencies are requesting

information from various

sources on population trends, and threats that are potentially affecting the species, such as habitat loss, commercial fishing, and others.

The agencies are aware of the importance of the American eel to many Native American Tribes and are requesting the assistance of the tribes in understanding changes to the American eel population, particularly in the following areas:

- Information regarding historic and current eel runs.
- Noted changes in eel sizes or weights.
- Past and current subsistence harvest methods and levels.
- Conservation efforts undertaken specifically for this species or from which the species has benefited.
- Other data collected or research conducted on this species or its habitat.

If you have information on the above topics, the agencies ask that you send it to Martin

Miller, Chief, Division of Endangered Species, Region 5, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 300 Westgate Center Drive, Hadley, MA 01035-9589; by facsimile to 413-253-8428; or by electronic mail to [AmericanEel@fws.gov](mailto:AmericanEel@fws.gov) by September 6<sup>th</sup>. Please be sure to add a subject line that identifies the letter as Tribal comments on the American eel status review.

The agencies also encourage you to contact the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Native American Liaisons in Region 2 (John Antonio), 3 (John Leonard), 4 (Kyla Hastie), 5 (D.J. Monette), or 6 (David Redhorse) offices with questions on the status review.



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their tribes are adequately prepared to deal with the implementation of the WIPP. The availability of training in Radiological/Nuclear Awareness can help Tribes prepare for the possibility of a transportation or other incident along the WIPP corridor.

## Getting Involved in the Training

In early fall of 2005, we plan to begin scheduling training courses for the first grant year which runs from September 1<sup>st</sup>, 2005 – August

31<sup>st</sup>, 2006. The Society will send out updated brochures that include a full list and description of all of the courses we offer and will try to contact people around the country who wish to host our courses. We try to schedule all of our training for the year in the beginning of the grant year so if you are interested in a course then contact us this fall. In the mean time, if you would like to get on the list to host a future course, contact Gloria Ortega with the NAFWS at 303-466-1725. If you have any questions about the training, contact Alan Veasey with UAB at 205-976-8617 or [aveasey@uab.edu](mailto:aveasey@uab.edu).

(- hunt- Cont. from p. 11 -)

will be accompanied at all times by a mentor from the Fish and Wildlife Department.

Benally said the agency expects more than 20 children may want to get in on the event, so applicants are being asked to write an essay explaining why they want to hunt and why they did not have an opportunity in the past.

They will also be asked to talk about their interest in hunting and other forms of outdoor recreation.

Application forms can be picked up at the Navajo Nation Fish & Wildlife headquarters in Window Rock, Arizona.

Those who can't pick one

up in person can call (928) 871-6450 to make arrangements to get a form sent to them. The deadline to apply is Aug. 26.

Benally said the event has attracted interest from potential sponsors outside the Navajo Nation, including companies and organizations willing to donate supplies.

"The interesting thing is that we tried to get other tribal departments involved but none would agree to help," he said. "So all of our support is coming from outside the tribe."

*Editor's Note: Eddie Benally is the 2003 Native American Fish & Wildlife Society's Conservation Officer of the Year.*

# CALENDAR

Time: An Environmental Approach to Sustaining Mother Earth". For more information, contact: Chris Morin at (306) 956-6945, ext. 270, (306) 665-1215.

**Sept. 25-29, 2005 - Wildlife Society 12th Annual Conference: Madison, WI**  
Sessions will cover: diseases in wildlife populations; advances in reptile and amphibian conservation; managing Western national parks for ecological integrity; birds in changing grassland landscapes—ecological and management implications; wildlife habituation; and gray wolf recovery in the western Great Lakes region. Contact: Thomas M. Franklin, Acting Executive Director, the Wildlife Society, 5410 Grosvenor Lane, Ste. 200, Bethesda, MD 20814-2144  
Phone: 301-897-9770  
Fax: 301-530-2471  
E-mail: tom@wildlife.org  
URL: <http://www.wildlife.org/conference/>

**October 1-4, 2005 - Fourth International Wolf Conference, Colorado Springs, CO.**  
"Frontiers of Wolf Recovery: The Southwestern U.S. and the World", is the conference theme. For more information: [www.wolf.org](http://www.wolf.org)

**October 16 - 20, 2005 - Pacific Region NAFWS Conference**, to be hosted by the Colville Tribe. The conference will be held at the Okanogan Inn, Omak, Washington. For more information: Joe Jay Pinkham III at (509) 865-6262, or Ted Lamebull at (541) 386-6363.



## \$18 MILLION IN GRANTS TO TRIBES

Interior Secretary Gale Norton today announced on August 11, 2005, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is awarding nearly \$8.1 million to help 45 federally recognized Indian tribes manage, conserve and protect fish and wildlife resources on tribal lands in 18 states.

The Service is awarding the grants under two programs: the Tribal Landowner Incentive Program and Tribal Wildlife Grant Program. The Tribal Landowner Incentive Program supports federally recognized Indian tribes to protect, restore,

and manage habitat for species at-risk, including federally listed endangered or threatened species, as well as proposed or candidate species on tribal lands. The Service is providing about \$2.1 million to help fund 17 Tribal Landowner Incentive projects.

About \$6 million will help fund 28 projects under the Tribal Wildlife Grant program. These grants are awarded to federally recognized Indian tribes to benefit fish, wildlife and their habitat including species that

( see p. 15 - grants - )



(- benefits - Cont. from p. 9 -)

resources on their lands, information that is critical for planning, but which many Tribes just didn't have. In fact, the lack of knowledge about what's out there is a challenge for conservation biologists across the nation and the world, according to Science magazine.

These grant funds are also helping with research that is also critical to conserving natural resources on Tribal lands. For the first time, many tribes are able to find some of this critical work, and the Service is glad to be a part in helping make that happen.

In the coming year, we will begin to package together information on the successful outcomes of each of these grants so we can work with you to communicate those successes to the public and to member of Congress to ensure future support for this program.

### COMMUNICATION

Communication is one of the core principles of the USFWS's Native American Policy that we continue to stress internally. Across the United States, we have established regional Native American liaisons whose jobs are to communicate and work closely with Tribes.

The USFWS's Tribal liaisons are your direct line into the heart of our organization, your strongest advocates, and the people who can guide you through the Federal government's complicated bureaucracy. They are selected for their positions based on their commitment to helping Tribes  
(see next column)

accomplish their conservation goals. They will link you in to USFWS programs and expertise that are available to support your work. Liaisons know how to work the system, and they are solidly in your corner, so I encourage you to continue your strong relationships with regional liaisons.

### TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AND PARTNERSHIP

As you all know, we have a long history of working together in conservation. One of our earliest partnerships dates to 1872, when the McCloud Wintu tribe, at the northern end of Sacramento Valley, played a key role in establishing the nation's first Pacific Coast salmon hatchery, along the McCloud River. The USFWS recognized much earlier than many other government agencies our shared interests and common bonds.

Today, we are working together all over the country to manage fish stocks. In fact, you will hear a presentation by our Assistant Regional Director for Fisheries, Linda Kelsey, tomorrow on an exciting new partnership initiative called the Southeast Aquatic Resource Partnership that we hope to involve southeastern Tribes in as full partners.

While our fisheries-related partnerships are still some of our strongest partnerships, we have broadened the relationships so that now all of our programs partner with Tribes. For example, our Ecological

(see next column)

Services offices offer technical assistance to Tribes on a range of issues, from water flows and water quality issues to endangered species conservation. And our Migratory Birds program has worked with tribes on NAWCA (North American Wetlands Conservation Act) grants, particularly in the Great Lakes area.

Today partnerships are more important than ever. The Secretary of the Interior often cites the 4-C's — Conservation, communication, cooperation all in the name of conservation. The Administration puts a high value on cooperative conservation.

### SELF DETERMINATION

No discussion of partnerships between the Service and Indian Country would be complete without mentioning Annual Funding Agreements. We now have in place Annual Funding Agreements at Bison Range NWR and Yukon Flats. We're proud of the agreements, and the Service looks forward to positive working relationships at both places.

### TRAINING AND EDUCATION

Earlier I mentioned the focus on youth at Noxubee Refuge. Nationwide, the USFWS puts special emphasis on Native American youth by supporting the Society's youth practicums. The USFWS's larger goal in supporting these practicums is self-serving: we hope eventually to recruit Native American students into natural resources

( See p. 15 - benefits - )

(Benefits - cont. from p. 14 -)

management careers.

I can't tell you how important I think it is for us to be grooming the next generation of fish and wildlife biologists and wildlife managers. This is a topic that we in the Service have discussed at length as the result of the impending retirement of so many "baby-boomers," who will take with them vast amounts of knowledge and experience. We need to focus on preparing those who will follow, giving them the benefit of what we've learned, including what we've learned from all the mistakes we've made.

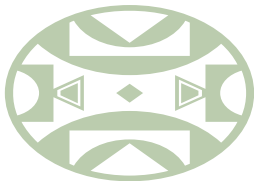
So we applaud the efforts of the Society in its summer youth practicums, and we want to help. We don't always have funding to offer, but we have people, and we want to make them available to you.

We also have a long history of working together on Law Enforcement training. Over time, we estimate that the USFWS has provided training to more than 500 tribal officers. We look forward to continuing this mutually beneficial program.

## CONCLUSION

In conclusion, I'd like to say that the relationship between the Society and the USFWS is a natural. As I read the Society's mission statement, it is nearly verbatim with our own – to conserve, enhance and protect fish and wildlife resources and their habitats. Fish and wildlife don't know geographic boundaries – they don't know where the reservation or the National Wildlife Refuge start and end. If we apply some "animal sense" to the situation, then, it is both logical and practical that we would work together on our shared mission.

What we will achieve together, will be greater than what we can achieve individually, of that I am certain. As Chief Seattle said, "When the Earth is sick, the animals will begin to disappear, when that happens, The Warriors of the Rainbow will come to save them." As fellow Warriors of the Rainbow, let's work together to heal the Earth, rediscover what has disappeared, and in the process, save ourselves. Thank you.



(- grouse, Cont. from p. 11 -)

Information regarding spatial extent and quality of that habitat will be fed directly into a comprehensive reintroduction plan. A preliminary evaluation resulted in the identification of lands with suitable and potential habitats. Suitable habitats consisted of high VOR readings in grass, shrub and sage, while excluding non-native vegetation. Potential habitats have VOR readings just less than Columbian Sharp-tailed Grouse. Potential habitats are named because most of these areas will only need a change in management and/or restoration to become suitable habitats. Suitable habitats were located in various upper elevations upon ridges near forest margins. While there are few large blocks of suitable habitat that can support a population, there is much more potential habitat. The combination of suitable and potential habitat yields large areas for restoration and future reintroduction plans.

## How Results Will be Used

The results from this assessment will give starting points for future restoration plans and goals. While residual cover is the main feature that needs to be improved on the majority of potential habitats, the amount of woody shrubs for winter cover and forage is lacking across the entire study area. These two features will provide more nesting cover and decrease the travel distances from winter and summer ranges. The reintroduction plan will organize, prioritize, and guide the reintroduction process, establish objective criteria by which to measure progress, and detail specific actions needed prior to reintroduction

## Reintroduction Plan

Reintroduction programs are an intricate undertaking, and require a long-term commitment by the involved entities. It is imperative that the probability of success be maximized in order to reap dividends from such an investment.

Successful reintroduction of Columbian Sharp-Tailed Grouse is thought to be intimately linked to the availability of adequate wintering and breeding habitats and should not be attempted if habitat is lacking. Columbian Sharp-Tailed Grouse have been reintroduced to Washington, Oregon, Idaho, and Nevada with

(See next column -)

mixed results. Fortunately, the Confederated Salish & Kootenai Tribes have extensive experience in reintroductions with a highly successful Peregrine Falcon and Trumpeter Swan breeding and reintroduction program. Dale Becker, Tribal Wildlife Management Program Manager, stated "This project will hopefully be another step in the Tribes' efforts to restore degraded ecosystems and the native species of wildlife that utilized them."

For more information regarding this project or others: please contact the Confederated Salish & Kootenai Tribal Wildlife Management Program.

Dale Becker or Brett Gullett, Wildlife Biologist, Confederated Salish & Kootenai Tribes

P.O. Box 278  
Pablo, MT 59855  
406-675-2700

Images of Columbian Sharp-Tailed Grouse can be found at the following Internet sites :

[http://wildlife.state.co.us/species\\_profiles/SharptailedGrouse/index.asp](http://wildlife.state.co.us/species_profiles/SharptailedGrouse/index.asp)  
<http://www.gis.usu.edu/~lema/grouse/finlrpt.html>  
[http://www.gpn.8m.net/Articles/C\\_Sharptails.html](http://www.gpn.8m.net/Articles/C_Sharptails.html)  
<http://www.bcgrasslands.org/conservation/species/stg/factsheet.htm>

(- hog hunt, Cont. from p. 8 -)

challenging to hunt like this. More so, if coming across a large hog, we'll let the dogs go after them."

If aggressive hunting keeps the populations in check, said Vosburgh, "then perhaps some good baseline information on the status of the population could be used. Of course, a structured harvest program would help too with the management of these hogs on the Choctaw reservation."

If anything, this hunt created adventure and excitement, along with something new. "I would go again," said Dell Brown, "and although I was afraid a croc would grab me, I would do it again, this time using a bow."

"For all these guys, it was their first time to hunt like this and it was great just witnessing their excitement," said Patrick. "They were all willing to get up early and ready to go by 5:00 a.m. I'm glad that we had the opportunity to offer this

(- grants - cont. from p. 14 -)

are not hunted or fished.

"We are empowering Tribes to do what the federal government cannot do alone for imperiled species on tribal lands," said Secretary of the Department of Interior Gale Norton. "These programs help us preserve tribal lands and their natural resources to conserve our shared wildlife heritage."

Since 2003, the Service has put \$23 million to work for tribal conservation efforts through both the Tribal Landowner Incentive Program and the Tribal Wildlife Grant Program.

"From the Orca inlet in Alaska to the cypress swamps in Florida, Indians and Indian tribes are helping us achieve our mission," said acting FWS director Matt Hogan. "Thanks to these two special grant programs, we are strengthening our partnerships to promote species conservation and protect healthy ecosystems for future generations."

The 562 federally recognized Indians and Indian tribes have a controlling interest in more than 52 million acres of tribal trust lands and an additional 40 million acres held by Alaska native corporations. Much of this land is relatively undisturbed, providing a significant amount of rare and important fish and wildlife habitat.

From a press release, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, August 11, 2005.

experience to the members of the NAFWS."

"I thank the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indian Wildlife and Parks department for their generosity and hospitality for providing us with a very rewarding experience," said Vosburgh. "I extend my gratitude to them."

"Yes, it was fun. It was one of the best trips I ever had," said Dell Brown.

On this particular day, the six hunters were: Mark Patrick, Mississippi Band of Choctaw Wildlife and Parks; Dell Brown, Spokane Tribe Conservation department; Ron Skates, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service; Pete Kruger, Squaxin Island Natural Resources department; Tom Doolittle, Bad River Tribal Natural Resources; and Tim Vosburgh, Chippewa Cree Tribal Natural Resources.

Editor's Note: The wild hog populations in Mississippi were established for hundreds of years and believed to be brought in by Spanish explorer, Hernando DeSoto.



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### Donations

I would like to help make a difference in the preservation, protection, and enhancement of tribal natural resources. I would like to donate to the following:

- Summer Youth Practicum
- Scholarship Fund
- Most Need
- Donation
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

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