Deborah Clairmont, a Soil Conservationist from the Natural Resources Conservation Service field office in Normal, Illinois has been named as the new National AIAN SEPM. Deborah has also worked for NRCS in Colorado and Montana. Her tribal affiliation is Muscogee Creek/French Canadian Cree. Congrats are in order and our hats are tipped because she is one of five people who make up the first recipients of the USDA/NRCS 1994 Tribal Scholarships and the only member of the original five to have earned a bachelor’s degree. Clairmont applied and was accepted into the program in 2005.

“At the time this opportunity came around, I really didn’t know how I was going to fulfill my dreams,” explains Clairmont. “I knew I wanted to earn my degree, I knew I loved nature and the environment, and I knew I wanted financial stability because I grew up under the poverty level. So when I got wind of this, I jumped at the chance.”

The USDA/NRCS 1994 Tribal Scholars Program (now called USDA 1994 Program) provides Scholarships for applicants attending 1994 Land Grant Tribal Colleges and Universities who seek careers in food, agriculture, and natural resource sciences, and/or other related disciplines. The USDA Department of Management Outreach Division now manages and administers the development and implementation of the USDA 1994 program in an effort to assist the Agency in accomplishing its workforce diversity goals.

“I knew the tremendous opportunity I had been given, and passing it by was not an option, no matter what the obstacles,” Clairmont goes on to say. “I went to school full time and worked part-time all while raising my son all on my own. After graduating from Salish Kootenai College with a Bachelor degree in Environmental Science- Environmental Restoration Ecology, NRCS offered me a fulltime position, I took it and I have not looked back.”

While in Colorado, Clairmont served as a Soil Conservationist as well as State AI/AN SEPM, Area Earth Team Coordinator, Area Civil Rights Coordinator, and was detailed to Washington, DC with the USDA/Department of Management 1994 Program in 2012. Deborah used her creative artistic abilities and created a “Worms Eye View” Soil Tunnel 10’ x 10’ tent for each area in Colorado to do outreach with children grades 4th - 8th, teaching them about Soil Quality and what...
The Legend of the Cherokee Rose

More than 100 years ago, the Cherokee people were driven from their home mountains when the white men discovered gold in the mountains of North Carolina and Georgia. Their journey is remembered as the Trail of Tears. Many people died of much hardship. Much of the time the trip was hard and sad and the women wept for losing their homes and their dignity. The old men knew that they must do something to help the women not to lose their strength in weeping. They knew the women would have to be very strong if they were to help the children survive.

So one night after they had made camp along the Trail of Tears, the old men sitting around the dying campfire called up to the Great One in Galunati (heaven) to help the people in their trouble. They told Him that the people were suffering and feared that the little ones would not survive to rebuild the Cherokee Nation. The Great One said, "Yes, I have seen the sorrows of the women and I can help them to keep their strength to help the children. Tell the women in the morning to look back where their tears have fallen to the ground. I will cause to grow quickly a plant. They will see a little green plant at first with a stem growing up. It will grow up and up and fall back down to touch the ground where another stem will begin to grow. I'll make the plant grow so fast at first that by afternoon they'll see a white rose, a beautiful blossom with five petals. In the center of the rose, I will put a pile of gold to remind them of the gold which the white man wanted when his greed drove the Cherokee from their ancestral home."

The Great One said that the green leaves will have seven leaflets, one for each of the seven clans of the Cherokee. The plant will begin to spread out all over, a very strong plant, a plant which will grow in large, strong clumps and it will take back some of the land they had lost. It will have stickers on every stem to protect it from anything that tries to move it away.

The next morning the old men told the women to look back for the sign from the Great One. The women saw the plant beginning as a tiny shoot and growing up and up until it spread out over the land. They watched as a blossom formed, so beautiful they forgot to weep and they felt beautiful and strong. By the afternoon they saw many white blossoms as far as they could see. The women began to think about their strength given them to bring up their children as the new Cherokee Nation. They knew the plant marked the path of the brutal Trail of Tears. The Cherokee women saw that the Cherokee Rose was strong enough to take back much of the land of their people.

Deborah Clairmont, National AIAN SEPM, continued
Prior to the early 1900s, Braget Marsh was an estuarine system at the mouth of the Nisqually River that supported a wide diversity of species. Juvenile Chinook salmon thrived in the natural habitat as they transitioned from fresh water to salt water, to live their adult lives, and back again to spawn in the stream of their birth. Diking began on the Marsh in 1905 and continued over a period of many years to prevent tidal influence and salt water intrusion. This made it possible to convert the wetlands to dairy, livestock and crop production. It remained drained and in agricultural production for many years. This condition was markedly different from most other estuaries in the Puget Sound region, many of which had been dredged and converted into harbors and ports.

After his retirement from farming, Kenny Braget decided that his land should be returned to its natural state. Therefore, instead of selling it to someone interested in continuing traditional farming operations, he sold the land in 2000 to the Nisqually Indian Tribe, who were committed to the restoration. Many partners worked on the site to remove and break dikes, restore hydraulic connectivity, and re-vegetate the system. Reforestation and vegetation conversion included restoration of some 54 acres by NRCS, who installed 42,000 trees and shrubs throughout the area with funding under the Wetlands Reserve Program. Since installation, the site has developed into an animal reserve that harbors many wildlife and bird species. The area is frequented by many wildlife viewers, and surveys indicate that salmon are returning in increasing numbers to the Nisqually River. The overall success of this project was due to the support of many partners, volunteers, and tribal members to keep the Nisqually River delta a pristine system for all future generations to enjoy. The next time you drive across the Nisqually on Interstate 5, take a few minutes to enjoy the scenery, walk the interpretive trails across tidal lands and be proud of the work in which you, as part of NRCS, have been involved.

First U.S. Treaty Signed at Fort Pitt With Delaware Indians

Duane Champagne 2/15/14 Indian Country Today

Between 1778 and 1871, the United States negotiated treaties with Indians. The first treaty was signed on September 17, 1778 at Fort Pitt, present day Pittsburgh, between the Delaware Nation and the United States of America, which was the name of the Confederacy of States before the adoption of the U.S. Constitution.

The Articles of Confederation was adopted a little over a year earlier in 1777, and was designed to establish a government independent of British rule. The primary purposes of the treaty with the Delaware was to gain Delaware trade, political, and military alliance on the side of the Americans during the War of Independence. The British likewise sought military and political alliances...
among the Indian nations to fight against the rebellious Americans. Both the Americans and British sought alliance of Indian nations in the war, and in return promised trade and goods.

Many tribes allied with the British, others with the United States of America, while some tribes tried to remain neutral. The Indians, already dependent on trade goods, needed to keep trade and diplomatic exchanges of goods open to one or the other of the warring antagonists. This situation gave Indian nations a strategic advantage at this point in history, since both the British and Americans needed Indian military alliances, or at least an agreement of neutrality. The Indian nations could negotiate with either the warring nations, although alliances were often determined by long-term friendly relations with the British or American communities.

The treaty with the Delaware gives insight into Indian and U.S. relations at the very beginning of the treaty making process. The Delaware treaty was a treaty of peace and mutual protection. "(A) perpetual peace and friendship shall from henceforth take place..." Both sides agreed to peaceful relations and to forget any past harm done to each other. If new antagonisms arose, the two nations agreed to negotiate their differences. As peaceful allies, the Delaware and United States of America agreed to supply military aid to each other in any just war.

In article three, the Americans argued that "the King of England and his adherents" invaded the United States of America, and the Delaware are asked to provide access through their country to American troops, assist in positioning of forts, and provide supplies. The Americans asked for the assistance of the best Delaware warriors and offered protection to the Delaware families while the warriors served with the US army. The Americans also offered the Delaware a well regulated trade in goods of clothing, utensils and implements of war.

Article four of the treaty was dedicated to procedures for handling justice relations. Unlike contemporary justice relations, the treaty makers agreed that "neither party shall proceed to the infliction of punishments on the citizens of the other... til a fair and impartial trial can be had by judges and juries of both parties, as near as can be to the laws, customs and usages of the contracting parties and natural justice..." The nations would negotiate the mode of such trials, and make further agreements to handle criminal fugitives, enemies, servants and slaves belonging to either nation.

The Americans recognized Delaware land rights and offered statehood to friendly Indian nations. The United States agreed to "guarantee to the aforesaid nation of Delawares, and their heirs, all their territorial rights... as it hath been bound by former treaties..." The Delaware could "invite any other tribes who have been friends to the interest of the United States, to join the present confederation, and to form a state whereof the Delaware nation shall be the head, and have a representation in Congress."

Needing Delaware military alliance and upholding treaties previously negotiated by the British, the Americans recognized Delaware internal judicial powers, and cultural differences, as well as Delaware independent political government, territory, and power to make treaties.

The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) partnered with the Oklahoma Tribal Conservation Advisory Council (OTCAC) and the Cherokee Nation to hold a “hands on” workshop that covered the eligibility and application process for USDA Farm Bill programs for Tribes, tribal members, women in agriculture and producers. The workshop was held on January 21, 2014 at the Cherokee Nation Tribal Headquarters, located at 17723 Hwy 62, in Tahlequah, Oklahoma. The workshops were held in the Tsa La Gi Ballroom. Two workshops were held: 10:00 AM to 12:00 PM and 2:00 PM to 4:00 PM. The opening prayer was given in Cherokee language by Cherokee Nation choir director and Cherokee Nation tribal member, Kathy Sierra.

USDA agencies participating in the workshop included NRCS, Farm Service Agency (FSA), Rural Development (RD) and Risk Management Agency (RMA). The focus of the workshops was to provide the opportunity for agriculture producers to receive “hands on” assistance in completing Farm Bill applications and receive the training on what forms need to be completed in order for the producer to be eligible for USDA programs. NRCS and FSA staff provided assistance in completing Farm Bill application and eligibility forms. RD and RMA provided valuable information and training on their community and individual program opportunities. In addition, all USDA agencies provided program information packets to all workshop attendees.

Facilitating the workshop was Dr. Carol Crouch, NRCS State Tribal Liaison and NRCS National American Indian AI/AN Special Emphasis Program Manager (SEPM), with a welcome provided by Chad Kacir, ASTC-FO, representing NRCS state leadership. NRCS staff providing technical assistance during the workshop were: Matt Ward, Program Liaison; District Conservationists, Lisel Worley, Michael Ramming and Audra Fenton; NRCS State AI/AN SEPM, Coty Parker and Soil Conservationist, Clint Fleharty. Representing other USDA agencies included; Jerry Efurd, Director of Community Programs and Brian Wiles, Business & Energy Program Director, for RD; Steve Molloy, Farm Loan Programs and Jerry Starkey, Farm Programs, for FSA and LaShaun Smith for RMA. Lunch was provided for all attendees at the Cherokee Nation Natural Resources department in the Cherokee Nation Restaurant of the Cherokees.

According to Dr. Crouch, “The workshops were a huge success because we were able to deliver “hands on” training to Tribes, tribal members, women in agriculture and producers in completing the farm bill application and how they become eligible for these programs.” Crouch added, “These types of workshops that focus on reaching our historically underserved populations could not happen without strong partnerships and government to government relations that NRCS has with the Cherokee Nation and OTCAC.” Attending the workshops were 17 Oklahoma Tribes, 41 tribal members, 9 women in agriculture and 7 beginning farmers.

Dr. Crouch was presented with an American Indian hand woven basket from Mr. Phil Givens, American Indian producer. Givens stated “The basket is a cultural gift to express appreciation to NRCS for holding such an important “hands on workshop” for American Indian producers. Crouch stated, “This handcrafted basket represents a vital tool that was used for gathering water and harvest, storage and cooking by American Indians; therefore, it is received as a gift that will be cherished as it represents that gathering and sharing of information that took place in the workshop today.”
The Urban Relocation Program

In the last half of the 20th Century, a government program that was little known at the time and is largely forgotten today created the largest movement of Indians in American history. The final scope and meaning of this massive social experiment is still impacting native peoples today.

World War II changed American society and profoundly affected the lives of Native Americans. The U.S. was becoming much more urban:

- In the 1940 Census, a little over half of all Americans (56.5 percent) were living in cities.
- In 1940, only around 8 percent of Indians were living in cities.

The Relocation Program did provide some Indians better jobs, at the price of being cut off from tribal roots. Government policy all through the 1700s and 1800s had been designed to make Indians into "yeomen farmers." The lawmakers who wrote these policies were forgetting that the first European settlers would have starved without the benevolent help of native farmers. They also were forgetting that indigenous plant breeders gave the world corn, beans, squash, pumpkins, tomatoes, potatoes, peanuts, avocados, artichokes, chocolate, vanilla, tobacco and many other indigenous crops. In return, native tribes were given the worst land primarily in the semi-arid plains. Now, the 20th Century rush to the city was bypassing Indians, and reservation tribes suffered huge levels of unemployment and poverty.

In 1950, the average Native American on a reservation earned $950. The average black person earned $2,000, and the average white person earned almost $4,000 — over four times more than Indians.

So, in 1952, the federal government initiated the Urban Indian Relocation Program. It was designed to entice reservation dwellers to seven major urban cities where the jobs supposedly were plentiful.

Relocation offices were set up in Chicago, Denver, Los Angeles, San Francisco, San Jose, St. Louis, Cincinnati, Cleveland and Dallas. Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) employees were supposed to orient new arrivals and manage financial and job training programs for them. Other BIA officials recruited prospective "Relocatees" from many of the reservations around the country.

Randy Edmonds — now a pow wow announcer in LA and featured in A Seat at the Drum — grew up in Anadarko, Oklahoma, and is Cad- do and Kiowa. He remembers how the BIA agent recruited him. "I was kind of hanging around the corners and, you know, drinking with the boys. And my aunt, my Kiowa aunt, she said she wasn't too pleased with that. And her husband was the BIA Relocation Project Officer, so he put out an APB on me. And when I got there he scolded me, of course, and said, you know, 'You're better than this. You shouldn't be hanging around with all those winos you know. You need to go somewhere and change your lifestyle.' He said, 'I have these seven cities that you have a choice to go to.'

Randy and his wife chose Los Angeles and boarded the train with their infant daughter and a basket of fried chicken. When they arrived, Randy had to catch a cab to the BIA office.

Relocatees were supposed to receive temporary housing, counseling and guidance in finding a job, permanent housing, community and social resources. The new migrants also were given money to tide them over on a sliding scale based on the number of children in the family. A man, his wife and four children got $80 a week for four weeks.

That's what they were promised. Some found that the promises were not kept. Not every relocatee found a
Texas NRCS Holds Native American Observance

By Melony C. Sikes, AI/AN SEPM Texas

Jewelry, rugs, pottery and art were on display to illustrate the differences between Several Native American Tribes. Navajo, Taos, Santo Domingo, Osage and Huicol jewelry were used so attendees could see the different styles crafted by these tribes.

A Mexican rug was compared to Navajo Rugs so people could see the difference in the designs and the weave. Navajo and Tigua pottery were also on display.

Since the National Native American Month Poster depicted wild rice being harvested on the Great Lakes, a poster was created to inform attendees of the Wild Rice that grows in San Marcos, Texas. *Zizania texana* grows in the upper two mile stretch of the San Marcos River and it is an endangered species. These springs are sacred to several tribes whose ancestors lived and hunted along the San Marcos River for centuries.

Garry Stephens, NRCS Tribal Liaison for Texas shared information about the three Federally recognized tribes in Texas and coordinated the cultural sampling of Native American foods.

In all there were seven displays ranging from Native American Artifacts to Native American Art and Culturally significant plants used by Native Americans. The event was held in Temple, Texas at the NRCS State Office. Many people from the State Office and beyond helped make this event a success.
Respect Yourself

It is important to respect one's self and how you conduct yourself in front of your family and friends. We are given a life to live with however way we wish to live it. But there is a strength that we as a people possess that makes us different. We are Arapaho, and we have a language and culture. Our ways have been handed down by our ancestors to our parents and grandparents, and it is our responsibility to pass these ways down to future generation. As individuals of the Arapaho Nation, it is important that we try to learn and carry on, and pass on our language and cultural beliefs, so that our race will continue. We must respect ourselves—our minds, bodies, and our spirits, so that we can contribute a sense of health and strength for our families and the rest of the tribe.

Respect your family

Our extended family relationships are important, as well as our nuclear family—our mother and father, our brothers and sisters. Cousins are brothers and sisters too; aunts and uncles assume roles as parents and you call them mothers and fathers; grand-parents give spiritual guidance and love.

There are certain rules and roles one follows toward respecting family members:

⇒ You don't use abusive language toward parents.
⇒ You don't tease cousins, your brothers and sisters.
⇒ You don't walk in front of an old person when they are talking or smoking.
⇒ You listen to parents because the have experienced life in all its goodness and can tell you about it.
⇒ You love your brothers and sisters because if you do, they will always stand beside you in your lifetime.
⇒ You listen to grandparents. They can guide you and teach about the traditions and spirituality or your people.

Respect Elders

The elders are the "Keepers of Tradition". They know the language, the stories, songs, and values of Indian people. Arapaho elders provide a link to the past; how our ancestors lived and believed. Some of our old people know about past societies and clans that no longer exist today. Their stories are full of adventure and they can tell you about a time when animals could talk and the people could understand. Many of the ways of the Arapaho have been handed down from one generation to the next by means of our elders. They knew about the age grade societies where one achieved status and recognition as a leader or medicine person only by reaching a certain age and undergoing certain rituals. Our elders know about the spiritual ways of the Arapaho and work toward preserving the spiritual ways for future generations. It is important to respect our elders. We must try to learn from them to preserve our language and culture. Today, we have many stories, and songs, but many do not speak the Arapaho language. We need to hold on to what we still have. Someday, we may be elders and depended on for the stories, songs, and language.

Respect Creation

The earth is like our mother. She gives us shelter, warmth, and protection by providing trees from the mountains and hills, to build and heat our homes. She feeds the animals and fish so that we can use these same animals for food and clothing. She gives us water from the lakes, rivers and stream to grow our crops and to fish. The earth provides roots and herbs for teas and medicines. The earth is good.

Everything in nature is good to us. The sun also gives us warmth, but also feeds the plants. Rain and snow nurture the earth and give back to the lakes, rivers, and streams. The wind blows away sickness and the moon governs the time of birth for future generations coming.

We must respect everything in Creation. We must not abuse her by destroying the trees, rivers and lakes. We should not take more than we need and we should use what we take. There are laws that govern nature, and we should obey them. By hurting the earth and animals, we hurt ourselves.
The Straight Dance [regalia] from Oklahoma Native American Tribes is a formal, tailored, prestigious form of southern dance clothes. The overall effect is of reassuring solidity, with everything closely matched and coordinated. It looks as if it is planned all at one time. This dance has evolved from the Hethuska Dances. It is believed that the Ponca tribe of American Indians created this style. The Hethuska are dances held by different societies. There are several articles in the standard set. The items that should match are arranged as sets, and everything should be closely coordinated.

The garters are finger woven. The side tabs match, and hang from hip to mid-calf. The better sets have beads woven into the fabric. Osage, Sac and Fox, or Ponca ribbonwork runs down each side of the aprons, the leggings, and three bars of it cross the dragger. The aprons, leggings, trailer, and otter dragger or drop are all made of heavy wool, usually dark blue. Red wool is usually reserved for the eldest son. One, two, or three ribbons bind the raw edges not covered by the main ribbonwork, and the edges are ornamented with white edge beading. Rainbow selvage edges mark the better sets made from trade cloth. Ribbonwork vests are becoming popular also. Kiowa and Comanche usually were tab leggings. These are usually made of white or natural leather, but are also made of canvas. At both knees, two tabs hang from the leggings. These are usually backed with red or blue wool. From the bottom of the tabs hang horsehair or twisted fringe. The tabs are also decorated with lanes of lazy stitch beadwork and edge beading. The Kiowa tabs are generally triangular, with the end coming to a point. The Comanche tabs are generally squared off at the end. Below the tabs going down the leggings are many strands of twisted leather fringe.

The belt is a strip of loom beadwork, 4 to 4 1/2 inches wide, and is mounted on heavy leather, or is sometimes made of silver conchos. Silver spots stud the edges of the leather. The dancer's otter strip, it has about 2 inches wide, and is attached with one or two beaded rosettes or silver conchos and hangs down the back. Some dancers also have all concho draggers. The spreader, arm bands, and slide are made of German sliver, in stamped, overlay, or cutout patterns. One feather is usually put in the spreader. The beadwork set is done in Peyote or Comanche beadwork. The fan is usually a flat or loose fan. The otter feathers are also attached with rosettes or conchos, and may be worn with or without an otter strip. The bandoliers match as to materials and colors, but may have from one to three strands or sometimes even four or more. They are worn crisscross on the body. The ribbon shirt is made of satin, brocade, or floral print material, with contrasting ribbon. The neckerchief, scarves, and arm band ribbons match the ribbon in the shirt. Scarves are attached to the bandoliers at the shoulder blades.
The roach is made of porcupine hair, and either white or red deer hair. A more prized roach is made of turkey beard hair. The headband is usually a white scarf.

Dancers sometimes carry a pouch of white deerskin, with beaded decoration or other types of bags. Bells may be either chrome or brass, and are mounted on a long leather strip. The moccasins are usually Southern Cheyenne, and should be at least partially beaded. A Straight Dancer will carry either a mirror board or a tail stick in their right hand. The tail stick originated as the badge of office of a Tail Dancer in a Hethuska Society. Today the tail stick is carried by many dancers in and out of the Hethuska Dance. A tail stick is usually given to a Straight Dancer by another experienced dancer. A mirror board is a substitute for the tail stick, and may be carried by any dancer.

There are a lot of clothes to wear in the outfit, and accordingly the dance is slow and proud. The art of straight Dancing is in the little, sometimes unnoticed things, both in the movement and the outfit. Smoothness, precision with the song, knowledge of dance etiquette, and a powerful sense of pride mark the outstanding Straight Dancer.

Read more: http://www.powwows.com/2011/07/21/straight-dancing/#ixzz2bILuh8HT
The federal policy of Indian Removal forced thousands of Native people of the Southeastern United States westward, with many only taking what little they could carry. For some families, this meant transporting livestock they had bred for generations.

One of those breeds that survived the Trail of Tears is the Cherokee horse, a distinctive breed that is recognized by the Southwest Spanish Mustang Association. The breed is descended from the horses brought to the Americas by Spanish conquistadors like Hernando de Soto.

Chief Tassel, a Cherokee leader during the time of removal in the 1830s, brought his herd with him on the Trail of Tears and re-established the herd in Indian Territory. According to the Mid-South Horse Review, the roots of Tassel’s herd can be traced back to 1775. Tassel’s descendants, the Whitmire family, continued the breed in eastern Oklahoma, with the average horse’s height being 14 to 14.2 hands high. Tracing lineage through the female line, the Whitmire family occasionally introduced outside stallions descended from Choctaw, Comanche and Mexican-descended herds.

The Cherokee Heritage Center, in the Tahlequah, Oklahoma area, obtained a horse descended from the Whitmire herd in 1997 as a memorial to Tim Strunk, a deceased son-in-law of Cherokee Heritage Center board member Bud Adams, who walked on in October.

Few remain of this breed, and it is considered endangered. Mid-America Horse Review says the breed is also recognized by the American Indian Horse Registry and the Horse of America Registry. According to the American Livestock Breeds Conservancy, there are an estimated 300 pure Cherokee horses left, with their status being listed as critical.

For more information on Hawkeye and Sadie visit the Cherokee Heritage Center’s website at Cherokee-Heritage.org.

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**Recipes**

From Dr. Carol Crouch, Oklahoma Tribal Liaison

### Blue Grape Dumplings

1/2 gal. unsweetened grape juice  
2 C. sugar  
2 tablespoon shortening, melted  
1 tsp. baking powder  
1 C. water  
flour

Bring grape juice to a rolling boil with the sugar. Mix water, shortening and baking powder. Add enough flour to make a stiff dough. Roll out thin on a floured board and cut out small pieces. Drop each of these one at a time into the boiling juice. Cook over high heat about 5 minutes. Then simmer for about 10 minutes with cover on before serving. Maybe served with cream or plain. Note: Grape Juice and Sugar must be boiling before adding the dumplings. Also a reader suggests doubling the amount of dumplings and adding a tsp of salt to make a better serving.

### Banaha Indian Bread

2 c. cornmeal  
1 1/2 c. boiling water  
1 tsp. soda  
1 tsp. salt  
Corn shucks (boil about 10 minutes before using)

Mix dry ingredients. Add water. Mixture should be stiff enough to handle easily. Form into oblong balls. Wrap in corn shucks. Tie in the middle with corn shuck string. Drop into a deep pot of boiling water. Cover and cook for 40 minutes. Serve hot.
A Strike Force meeting was held at the MOWA Choctaw Tribal offices located in Mount Vernon, Alabama on February 13, 2014 for the purpose of informing the Tribal officials about USDA programs and to tour the forestland. The tribe has an existing EQIP contract and has planted longleaf on some of their acres. One of the newer interests expressed was in small ruminants and silvopasture. Agency representatives from USDA’s Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), Farm Service Agency (FSA), Alabama Cooperative Extension System (ACES), and Tuskegee University’s agricultural specialists presented information and provided resource materials to be shared with the other tribal members.

Local DC Mike Gunn (back to camera) discussing resource concerns with Robert Russell and Chief Weaver before site the visit.

Left to Right: Charlie Ramsey, West Area ASCT; Wendy Smith, AIAN SEPM; Chief Weaver, MOWA Band of Choctaw Indians, Robert Russell, Executive Director, Alabama Indian Affairs Commission

The curriculum contains five main modules and is designed to be used by tribal college instructors, extension agents or workshop instructors.

- Module 1: Business
- Module 2: Accounting
- Module 3: Financial Management
- Module 4: Agribusiness Economics and Marketing
- Module 5: Land Use and Management

If you would like to view or provide this curriculum to any interested customers/partners you can access the materials at: www.firstnations.org/knowledge-center/foods-health/biz_of_indian_ag.
<table>
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<th>Links of Interest</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Wounded Knee: The Dark Hour</strong></td>
<td><a href="http://youtu.be/PkJaYe1T8I8">http://youtu.be/PkJaYe1T8I8</a></td>
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<td>Discusses the Ghost Dance and provides information from a survivor.</td>
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<td>The Smithsonian asked America Indian leaders and others to answer a series of</td>
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<td>questions about themselves.</td>
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<td><strong>Wacipi – Pow Wow Documentary</strong></td>
<td><a href="http://www.powwows.com/2014/02/28/wacipi-pow-wow/?utm_source=feedburner&amp;utm_medium=feed&amp;utm_campaign=Feed%3A+PowwowscomArticles+%28PowWows.com+Articles%29">http://www.powwows.com/2014/02/28/wacipi-pow-wow/?utm_source=feedburner&amp;utm_medium=feed&amp;utm_campaign=Feed%3A+PowwowscomArticles+%28PowWows.com+Articles%29</a></td>
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<td>This documentary provides an overview of the importance of Pow Wows in Tribal life.</td>
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<th><strong>National Geographic</strong></th>
<th><a href="http://ngm.nationalgeographic.com/2014/03/horse-tribes/quammen-text">http://ngm.nationalgeographic.com/2014/03/horse-tribes/quammen-text</a></th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Native American Horses</strong></td>
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<td><strong>March 2014</strong></td>
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<th><strong>How Wolves Change a River</strong></th>
<th><a href="http://theunboundedspirit.com/how-wolves-change-rivers/">http://theunboundedspirit.com/how-wolves-change-rivers/</a></th>
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<td>The incredible story of how re-introduction of wolves into Yellowstone after 20 years changed the ecosystem. The deer moved their feeding sites from the bottomlands; shrubs and trees grew in these areas, more animal and birds moved in and the river course changed.</td>
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<th><strong>The Fancy Dance</strong></th>
<th><a href="http://www.powwows.com/2014/03/31/pow-wow-trail-the-fancy-dance/">http://www.powwows.com/2014/03/31/pow-wow-trail-the-fancy-dance/</a></th>
</tr>
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<td>The Fancy Dance is the sixth episode of an eleven part television series from 2001 known as “The Pow Wow Trail”. Over the course of 2 years producer Jeremy Torrie and film crew traveled to over 40 reservations, ceremonies and Pow Wow celebrations. The Fancy Dance has always been the climax of the pow wow. It</td>
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Read more: http://www.powwows.com/2014/03/31/pow-wow-trail-the-fancy-dance/#ixzz2xddlHUEd |
In 2004, a vision was shared that Mother Earth needed a voice. That was the beginning of the Council of the Thirteen Indigenous Grandmothers. The Grandmother’s visit each other’s countries, all over the world, learning about their natural resources and teaching about respect and honor for water, soil and other natural resources. They are a voice of wisdom in the world today.

The Council has a website at http://www.grandmotherscouncil.org/. This shows the gatherings that have taken place in the past and the gatherings planned for the future. There are also links that can be found online which feature the biography of each Grandmother. One can even join 7 week virtual courses for prayer, healing, wisdom and blessings. In Chicago, IL on April 25 - 27, 2014 “Awakenings the Elder Within” took place with Grandmother Flordemayo, Grandmother Monca Polacca and Grandmother Rita Long-Visitor Holy Dance in attendance.

There has been a book written called, “Grandmother’s Counsel the World,” that can be found online. In the book there are many quotes of the Grandmother’s which have been compiled that are very profound and interesting. One of my favorites is “Mother Earth is a conscious, alive, and responsive being - a goddess in her own right.” There has also been a movie made called “For the Next 7 Generations.” My hope is that all who read this article are blessed and are able to access the links below to learn these teachings.

The Grandmothers (left to right):
1. Grandmother Clara Shinobu Iura… Santo Daime (Amazon Rain Forrest of Brazil)
2. Grandmother Maria Alice Campos Freire… Santo Daime (Amazon Rain Forrest of Brazil)
3. Grandmother Margaret Behan… Arapaho/Cheyenne (Montana)
4. Grandmother Rita Ritka Blumenstein… Yupik (Artic Circle)
5. Grandmother Beatrice Long Visitor Holy Dance … Oglala Lakota (South Dakota)
6. Grandmother Rita Long Visitor Holy Dance … Oglala Lakota (South Dakota)
7. Grandmother Bernadette Rebienot... Omyene (Africa)
8. Grandmother Mona Policca… Hopi/Havasupai/Tewa (Arizona)
9. Grandmother Julia Casimiro… Mazatec (Mexico)
10. Grandmother Agnes Baker Pilgrim… Takelma Siletz (Oregon)
11. Grandmother Flordemayo Mayan (Highlands of Central America/New Mexico)
12. Grandmother Maria Alice Campos Freire… Santo Daime (Amazon Rain Forrest of Brazil)
13. Grandmother Tsering Dolma Gyaltong… Tibetan Buddhist (Tibet/Canada)

http://13grandmotherscourse.com/Wisdom
www.grandmotherscouncil.com/
www.sacredstudies.org/
NRCS partnered with the Choctaw Nation and their Career Development Department to conduct soil health demonstrations at their Career Opportunities Expo held on February 26, 2014 in McAlester, Oklahoma. The event was held at the Southeast Expo Center in McAlester, Oklahoma. The Choctaw Nation, Choctaw Nation Career Development Division and the Choctaw Nation Scholarship Division sponsored the event. The theme for the career expo was *Winds of Change*.

Chief Gregory E. Pyle and Assistant Chief Gary Batton of the Choctaw Nation provided a welcome to all participants during the opening ceremonies.

There were 170 exhibits at the career expo. The exhibitors included: federal and state agencies; Oklahoma universities; fortune 500 companies and small and large companies from across Oklahoma. The total number of attendees at the expo was estimated at approximately 1600. The attendees were junior and seniors from twenty-nine (29) high schools and adult and high school students that are currently enrolled in seven (7) Oklahoma Technology Centers located in Southeast Oklahoma. There were 94 veterans in attendance who are currently enrolled in classes at a Technology Center.

Greg Scott, NRCS retired soil scientist; now working for OCC, conducted soil health demonstrations that unlocked the secrets that the soil hold and illustrated the important of soil health. Derek Kelso, NRCS liaison for the Choctaw Nation and Dr. Carol Crouch, State Tribal liaison, shared with attendees the different careers that NRCS has in the field of STEM. Students, professionals, sponsors, science teachers, instructors and professors received over 2000 pieces of NRCS materials such as: NRCS Pathways flyer; *Backyard Conservation*; book marks;...
Healthy soil has millions, maybe billions, of organisms per cubic meter

By Charlotte Pyle, Landscape Ecologist, Connecticut

The soil quality people say that there may be several billion organisms (most of them microscopic) in a cubic meter of soil. One billion is more than I can count or even visualize. Ten hundred is one thousand. I can imagine ten $100 bills; and I think there used to be $1000 bills. Let’s take 1,000 of those $1000 bills. Now we have a million dollars (we wish!). Now imagine there were a $1,000,000 bill and you had 1,000 of those. That would be one billion. (That’s a lot of pennies.)

Getting back to several billion organisms per cubic meter, what does a cubic meter look like?

To start with the familiar: a cubic foot is like a little cardboard file box one foot wide, one foot front to back, and one foot high. One yard is three feet long. So a cubic yard would be held in a large cardboard box 3 feet wide, 3 feet front to back, and 3 feet high. That multiplies out to make 27 cubic feet per cubic yard. Twenty-seven little 1-cubic foot file boxes stacked out in the hall would be pretty noticeable. (Yet, if you change the context and think about roads, you probably know that one cubic yard doesn’t go very far when you are spreading gravel.)

Compared to a yard’s length, a meter is a slightly longer (a little over 39 inches instead of 36 inches). On me, this is about waist-high. So, one cubic meter would be like a tiny chicken holding pen that was about 39” wide, 39” front to back, with waist-high sides. One cubic meter is about 35 cubic feet.

A large pickup truck (say 96” long and 64” wide with sides 18” high) would hold 2.37 cubic yards if it were filled flush to the top with something, and nothing settled. (We will not discuss whether or the truck could bear the weight of the something.) Twisting this around, a cubic yard of soil would fill that truck bed eight inches deep. A cubic meter would fill the bed ten inches deep.

So, when someone says there may be several billion organisms per cubic meter of soil, think of how very small those creatures must be if they are hidden away on and between the soil particles in the 10 inches of soil in the back of a large pickup. Stop for a moment and enjoy the wonder of knowing that even though we won’t ever see even a millionth of those billion organisms we can help them live well by treating the soil well.

A few simple ways to treat the soil well include: preventing compaction, keeping crop residues on the site to break down and feed the soil, and using cover crops to protect the soil surface and to interact underground with soil organisms for the mutual benefit of the plants as well as the organisms.

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