



ITEC NEWS

"The Official Newsletter of the Inter-Tribal Environmental Council"

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Thlopthlocco Tribal Town Summer Festival

ITEC MEMBER TRIBES

- Absentee-Shawnee Tribe
- Alabama-Coushatta Tribe
- Alabama-Quassarte Tribe
- Apache Tribe
- Caddo Nation
- Cherokee Nation
- Cheyenne/Arapaho Tribes
- Citizen Potawatomi Nation
- Comanche Nation
- Coushatta Tribe of Louisiana
- Delaware Nation
- Delaware Tribe
- Eastern Shawnee Tribe
- Fort Sill Apache
- Iowa Tribe
- Jicarilla Apache Nation
- Kaw Nation
- Kialegee Tribal Town
- Kickapoo Tribe
- Kiowa Tribe
- Miami Tribe
- Modoc Tribe
- Muscogee (Creek) Nation
- Osage Nation
- Otoe-Missouria Tribe
- Ottawa Tribe
- Pawnee Nation
- Peoria Tribe
- Ponca Tribe
- Pueblo of Laguna
- Pueblo of Pojoaque
- Pueblo of Santa Clara
- Pueblo of Taos
- Pueblo of Tesuque
- Quapaw Tribe
- Sac & Fox Nation
- Seminole Nation
- Seneca-Cayuga Nation
- Shawnee Tribe
- Thlopthlocco Tribal Town
- Tonkawa Tribe
- Wichita & Affiliated Tribes
- Wyandotte Nation
- Ysleta del Sur Pueblo
- Zuni Tribe

Thlopthlocco Tribal Town hosted its second annual Summer Festival in August. The Tribal Town departments had booths set up to reach out to the members and guests with upcoming events in their department as well as offering free promotional handouts and literature with their department contact information. The Tribal Town assisted their school-aged members with school supplies at the festival which was a big success. The festival offered a wide array of activities for members and guests including a 3 on 3 basketball tournament, horseshoe tournament, archery competition, and a homerun derby. There were games for the children as well as free pony rides and inflatable waterslides. Vendors set up to offer crafts and food to the festival attendees.



The goal of the festival was to teach the younger generations about the traditions of the tribe. There was a traditional food competition showcasing some favorite traditional foods as well as a PowerPoint presentation on the history of the tribe. There was a ceremony to recognize the elders as well as some members of excellence. A game of stickball was also included for anyone who wanted to watch or participate. The activities lasted all day and the evening ended with an exhibition stomp dance. A popular Native American band, Smilin' Vic and the Soul Monkeys, closed out the night with a live concert which was enjoyed by everyone. The Tribal

Town will continue to host the Summer Festival each year and hopes to add to it to offer its members and guests even more fun and continue to pass the traditions of the tribe on to the younger generations.



Monarch Conservation's All About Connections

When we decided to go “all in” on monarch conservation, we knew we’d need the help of every U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service program. We have employees with expertise on the complexities of wildlife migration, we have employees skilled at partnering with other federal and state agencies and private landowners, we have employees who educate the American people, we have employees applying the best scientific research and tools available to broaden our conservation reach, and they’re all involved in monarch conservation.

Working cooperatively across programs and offices, we took action to restore and enhance more than 330,000 acres in 2016 for monarchs and other pollinators. That exceeds the goal the Department of Interior set for us of restoring or enhancing 320,000 acres of habitat by end of fiscal year 2017. This accomplishment is the result of several factors, including: 1) our leadership identifying monarch conservation as a Service National Priority both internally to all employees and to external conservation partners, 2) our commitment of \$4 million in funding for monarch conservation in 2016, and 3) opportunities to enhance a large number of acres on national wildlife refuges.



“I am proud of our on-the-ground conservation actions for monarchs and other pollinators. It is catalyzing massive conservation effort across North America,” says U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Director Dan Ashe.

This was also the first year of full implementation of the Service’s Monarch Butterfly Conservation Initiative, another wing spreading our monarch conservation actions across the nation. We will continue efforts to restore and enhance habitat for monarchs and other pollinators over the next four years through 2020.

It takes every connection to provide a future filled with monarchs. We will use every bit of knowledge we have, but monarch conservation requires a national effort. Everyone -- from schoolchildren to CEOs -- must be involved.

“We can accomplish great things for the monarch and other pollinators by continuing to work collectively and across the landscape,” says Director Ashe.

Learn more about our conservation actions and how you can help at [Save the Monarch Butterfly](https://www.fws.gov/news/blog/index.cfm/2016/12/16/Monarch-Conservations-All-about-Connections).

<https://www.fws.gov/news/blog/index.cfm/2016/12/16/Monarch-Conservations-All-about-Connections>

Save the monarch butterfly



The monarch butterfly is one of the most recognizable species in North America and it’s in trouble. Monarchs undertake one of the world’s most remarkable migrations, traveling thousands of miles over several generations from Mexico, across the United States, to Canada.

North American monarch butterflies are in trouble. Threats, including climate change, pesticide use and habitat loss are having a devastating impact on their populations and the migration phenomenon. Unless we act now to help the Monarch, this amazing animal could disappear in our lifetime.

Monarchs are now in the process of being considered for protection under the Endangered Species Act. Our hope is that we can implement conservation measures that help the butterfly to the point that we don’t have to list it.

The state of Monarchs reflects the health of the American landscape and its pollinators. Monarch declines are symptomatic of environmental problems that also pose risks to food production, the spectacular natural places that help define our national identity, and our own health. Conserving and connecting habitat for monarchs will benefit many other plants and animals, including critical insect and avian pollinators, and future generations of Americans.

We've done this before

A billion monarch butterflies once fluttered across the North American landscape, representing one of the greatest migration phenomena in all of nature. Over the last 20 years, their numbers declined precipitously, with the eastern population falling to a mere 33 million in 2014.

In 2015, that number grew to approximately 56.5 million butterflies that concentrated on less than three acres at overwintering sites in Mexico — hardly enough to assure the monarch's migration for generations to come. The vast continental range of the monarch butterfly presents a complex host of challenges to saving this charismatic insect.

But we have done this before.

The population of bald eagles — America's national bird — hit rock bottom in 1963 with just 417 nesting pairs in the contiguous United States. You probably know the story: DDT, a widely used insecticide, built up in adult eagles and thinned the shells of their eggs that would crack while being incubated by the parents. Congress passed the Endangered Species Act, we took a host of conservation actions, and Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring* set off a firestorm that changed the country's view of the natural and ended the indiscriminate use of pesticides such as DDT. Today, more than 10,000 pairs of bald eagles roam the country from coast to coast.

For the monarch butterfly, arguably the continent's most beloved butterfly, many threats loom, especially the loss of native milkweed it needs to lay its eggs and its caterpillars need to eat. Nectar plants are also critical to feed the adult butterflies in spring, summer and fall as they migrate more than 3,000 miles between their winter sanctuary in Mexico and breeding habitats across the United States and up into Canada. The wide-scale adoption of herbicide-resistant corn and soy crops, has drastically changed the agricultural landscape, once a vibrant source of breeding and migrating habitat for monarchs. This resistance enables broad and non-targeted application of herbicides that indiscriminately kills vegetation growing around farm fields and in nearby habitat, including milkweed.

"We need to create alternate habitat for the monarch butterfly," Service Director Dan Ashe shared with reporters at the National Press Club before Valentine's Day when he announced an ambitious campaign, working with the National Wildlife Federation and the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (which received \$1.2 million from the Service to create a Monarch Conservation Fund) to save the monarch butterfly.

In the words of Colin O'Mara, the National Wildlife Federation's CEO, "This is a problem we can fix." Again, we have done it before.

Beyond their beauty and now well-known status, monarchs are excellent indicators of the health of the American landscape, including productive and essential croplands in the Midwest. Monarch declines are symptomatic of environmental problems that also pose risks to food production, the spectacular natural places that help define the national identity, and human health.

The alarm has been raised, and we have answered the call. We work with partners to restore and enhance more than 200,000 acres of habitat for monarchs and other pollinators on public and private lands. On top of that, the agency has dedicated an additional \$2 million in funding for priority projects in three key geographic areas:

In spring breeding areas in Texas and Oklahoma, projects include a Native Pollinator Initiative in Texas and an effort to increase commercial production of milkweed;

In the Midwest Corn Belt, an area important for summer breeding, projects include Milkweeds for Monarchs: The St. Louis Butterfly Project and efforts by the Service's Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program, which engages private landowners in conservation;

In areas west of the Rockies, the Service is funding work to develop a range-wide approach for conserving the western monarch population.

<https://www.fws.gov/savethemonarch/done-this-before.html>



IN THE DIRECTORS CORNER:

By— Greg Jojola

Pueblo of Laguna Environmental Programs

Where is the Pueblo of Laguna Community located?

The Pueblo of Laguna (POL) is a federally recognized Indian Tribe located in West-Central New Mexico, 55 miles west of Albuquerque. The POL was the first Pueblo to adopt a written Constitution in 1908. The constitution was replaced under the Indian Reorganization Act of 1934, revised in 1958, and amended in 1984. Currently there are over 8,400 enrolled Laguna members and roughly 4,200 enrolled members currently reside on the reservation.



(Photo: Pueblo of Laguna)

The reservation is comprised of approximately 500,000 acres of trust lands and 30,000 acres of Bureau of Land Management, State, and privately owned lands. The POL reservation occupies four separate New Mexico counties: Cibola, Valencia, Bernalillo and Sandoval. Within the reservation there are six separate villages: Seama, Paraje, Paguante, Encinal, Mesita and Laguna.

How many community members are served by the Environmental department?

4,200 members

How long have you been the Environmental Director?

I have been the Environmental Manger for 2 years and 2 months.

What are the primary environmental concerns that affect your tribal community?

*Water Quality- POL utilizes Rio Paguante, Encinal Creek and Water Canyon Creek as the primary source of surface water on the reservation. These water sources recharge aquifers that are used to supply the domestic drinking water for the entire Pueblo of Laguna. The previous mentioned water sources flow into the Rio San Jose, and then discharge into the Rio Puerco. It is estimated that 143 miles of rivers, streams and springs flow through the POL reservation. There is the Jackpile Uranium Mine (Superfund site) on the POL reservation that was once the largest open pit uranium mine in the world. While it has been mostly reclaimed, discharges from this mine, as well as from similar mines and mills upstream could have an effect on the Pueblo's watershed.

As an Environmental Tribal Director tell us what you enjoy most about your work?

My staff and I enjoy interacting and sharing environmental concerns with the community. We educate and advise on various environmental risks and provide answers to any questions. After working in various large companies, it is refreshing and rewarding to be giving back to my tribe and helping preserve our natural resources for years to come.



What are some of your future plans for your tribe's environmental programs to address tribal environmental needs or concerns?

We plan on applying for CWA Section 319 funds to begin watershed restoration projects throughout the reservation. Also, the pueblo will be applying for a Superfund Cooperative Agreement with the US EPA to assist in participating in the current Remedial Investigation and Feasibility Study (RI/FS). This will also ensure that the Pueblo has "meaningful and substantial" involvement as defined under CERCLA statutes.

What have been your biggest challenges?

Some of the biggest challenges has been turnover in staff. The pueblo is somewhat remote and sometimes it becomes difficult to recruit, hire and sustain highly qualified technical professionals.



ITEC Superfund Program

The ITEC Superfund Program has evaluated 349 sites on behalf of Tribes since 1991. These types of assessments include Pre-CERCLIS Screenings, Preliminary Assessments, Site Inspection and Site Inspection Prioritization activities.

The ITEC Superfund Program can provide non-emergency evaluation and site assessment activities on sites if the following criteria are met:

- Hazardous Waste (as defined in CERCLA) is known or suspected to be present on the site.
- The site, such as an industrial facility, is abandoned or inactive.
- Waste on the site has impacted, or has the potential to impact tribal lands or tribal populations.

If your Tribe would like to know more about the ITEC Superfund Program, or if you have a site that you are concerned about and would like to have Site Assessment activities conducted, please contact Jason White at jason-white@cherokee.org or (918) 453-5110.



RTOC MEETING



Regional Tribal Operations Committee meetings were held November 29-30, 2016 at the Hard Rock Hotel & Casino in Catoosa, OK. Approximately 27 Tribes and several EPA representatives attended. Topics of discussion included: various reports, division updates, RTOC elections, 106 Water Quality Electronic Reporting Tool, Changes to Water Quality Tribal Assessment reports, Budget Reporting Tool, Transition Document, 2005 EPA Letter Regarding Access of Information, and Local Environmental Observers Network.



Cherokee Nation Environmental Programs Underground Storage Tank Program

The underground storage tank program at Cherokee Nation Environmental Programs operates under the Inter-Tribal Environmental Council (ITEC). It is through the ITEC that the program can offer a variety of services to tribes that are members of ITEC. Currently the UST program services 21 tribes and 38 facilities across New Mexico, Oklahoma, and Texas.

The UST program offers compliance assistance and training to these 21 tribes and 38 facilities. This includes:

- A visit to the tribe's UST facility annually to perform a compliance assistance inspection.
- A detailed report of the compliance issues that were observed and steps to take to remediate these issues.
- Answers to UST related questions or provide contractor information to the tribe.
- On-site owner and operator training for the people who operate the UST facility.

The UST program will also assist your Tribe with the planning and installation of a new station or investigate stations that the Tribe may be interested in purchasing. Along with that ITEC will monitor tank installs and removals to ensure they are done properly and by regulation.

If there are any questions regarding the UST Program please contact:

David Hayes: 918-453-5149 or 918-316-7531

david-hayes@cherokee.org



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*The Cherokee Nation Environmental Program (CNEP) publishes **ITEC News** each quarter. The mission statement is to protect the health of Native Americans, their natural resources, and their environment as it relates to air, land and water. To accomplish this mission, ITEC provides technical support, environmental services, and assistance in developing Tribal environmental programs to the member Tribes.*

The viewpoints contained in this newsletter are not necessarily those of the USEPA or the CNEP/ITEC. Free and open discussion of all environmentally related issues is strongly encouraged. We also encourage submission of letters, comments, and articles from readers so as to promote a greater awareness among our people about environmental issues and to foster the free exchange of information, technology, and culturally relevant values of Tribal people.

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The ITEC NEWS gladly accepts and encourages your Tribal environmental information for upcoming issues and events. If you wish to contribute any articles in the next issue or for questions about this newsletter, please call 1-800-259-5376 to contact Karen Dye (Karen-dye@cherokee.org).



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