With great sadness we must announce that ITEP’s director, Cal Seciwa, passed away on July 13, at Zuni Pueblo. Our heartfelt condolences go out to his wife, Margie, daughters Chelsa and Collyn, grandchildren, other family members, friends, and colleagues.

Cal was sent off with a traditional Zuni ceremony at the Shalako home he and his family sponsored at Zuni in 2006. The ceremony was attended by scores of family and community members as well as others from far and wide. As a member of Zuni’s Badger Clan, born for the Eagle Clan, and one with strong lifelong ties to traditional Zuni culture, Cal entered the next phase of his journey as he would have wanted.

Cal took on the directorship of ITEP in March 2007. Within a year he began to face increasingly serious health problems that in time pulled him away from participation in ITEP’s efforts. Our hope was that he would overcome those challenges and continue his good work on behalf of the tribes. With his passing we’ve lost a strong, seasoned advocate for tribal sovereignty and justice. Cal was an inspiring man with qualities we could never hope to replace. All who were graced by his presence were aware of his gentle nature, keen intelligence, and fierce desire to support the tribes and help better the lives of Native people everywhere.

Although his illness sidelined him in recent months, many of you got to know Cal as he traveled about the country in support of the Institute’s programs. Others knew him from his 19 years of service with Arizona State University, or from his earlier work as an educator, tribal administrator, economic planner, and political activist. Leading ITEP was a new challenge for Cal, but he dove into the effort with vigor and exercised his wisdom and many skills to contribute to the organization’s growth and development. Education, tribal sovereignty, and protection of sacred sites were among his passions.

As we continue our environmental education and training efforts on behalf of the tribes, our memories of Cal will help us keep the fire burning strong.

If you would like to help the family defray some of the heavy medical expenses they incurred in Cal’s final days, please send donations to: Chelsa A. Seciwa, c/o ITEP, PO Box 15004, Flagstaff AZ 86011, and we’ll pass them on to the family with your prayers and supportive thoughts. As Cal would say in his Zuni tongue, E’la:kwa (thank you).
National Tribal Forum 2009: Long-Term Challenges, Fresh Opportunities

More than 120 tribal and other air management professionals gathered in Milwaukee on June 2–4 for three days of information-sharing and community-building. This year’s National Tribal Forum, sponsored jointly by ITEP and the National Tribal Air Association, was held at the Potawatomi Bingo Casino, a state-of-the-art gaming and conference facility owned by the Forest County Potawatomi Community. As always, this year’s Forum provided the tribal air community with the chance to share ideas and accomplishments, make valuable connections, and learn the latest on a wide range of air-related topics, from indoor-air and ambient monitoring to EPA policy changes to global climate change adaptation and mitigation strategies. Attendees came away with new ideas, fresh excitement about their work, and stronger links to the ever-expanding community of tribal air-management professionals.

The NTF covered a broad range of air-quality concerns, but perhaps the twofold “theme” of this year’s event was 1) renewed optimism due to the Obama administration’s expressed commitment to environmental protection, which many believe will mean increased assistance and funding for the tribes; and 2) climate change and the developing green economy.

Potawatomi Tribal Chairman, Philip Shopodock, expressed his hope that a more-sustainable way of life can be achieved across American society. “Wind energy, green jobs, solar—that’s the way we have to go. I believe President Obama is committed to that goal,” he said. “But we have to motivate his administration to do things right.”

Several U.S. EPA presenters expressed their belief the agency has a fresh mandate to aggressively protect the environment, even in the face of current economic stresses. They described new and existing funding programs to which tribes can apply, for example to support clean diesel, indoor air quality, and “Climate Showcase Communities” grants. Their renewed optimism is bolstered by a federal stimulus package that in effect doubles EPA’s funding, at least for the short term. Although the details are still in play, that should translate to an increase in the tribal “set-aside” for environmental programs.

The issue of climate change was ever-present, regardless of the main topic of discussion. A large contingent of Alaska Natives at this year’s conference aired their concerns about the disproportionate impacts of global warming on their communities. EPA

see FORUM on page 3
Regardless of the topic, climate change was rarely far from center focus at this year’s Forum. Whether discussions centered on solid waste management, diesel retrofits, or government funding mechanisms for various pollution-control programs, global warming hovered as a contributing or complicating factor.

This year’s focus on climate began with opening comments by Forest County Potawatomi Chairman, Phil Shopodock, who noted that alternative-energy technologies such as solar collectors and wind turbines represent “the way we have to go.” EPA Region 5 Director of the Air and Radiation Division, Cheryl Newton, and Office of Atmospheric Programs staffer Neelam Patel emphasized the incoming administration’s fresh engagement on climate issues, including progress on U.S. EPA’s proposed “endangerment finding” that would delineate more clearly the threat of atmospheric carbon loading. Based in a Supreme Court order in 2007 but basically ignored by the previous administration, the finding, if enacted, will buttress the need for federal regulation of greenhouse-gas emissions.

Alaska presenters Rose Kalistook of the Orutsararmiut Village Council and Violet Yeaton of the Port Graham Village Council spoke of global-warming impacts on tribes in the Far North, from melting permafrost to changes in animal and plant distribution to the new dangers subsistence hunters face from thinning ice. Syndi Smallwood described the Pechanga Tribe’s recycling program, designed primarily to reduce the California tribe’s carbon footprint.

Several EPA representatives presented information on energy efficiency programs and grant opportunities. Presenter Ann McCabe reviewed details of The Climate Registry, a widely supported nonprofit effort to gather voluntary and mandatory greenhouse-gas data. The Registry’s membership includes over 330 members, including 41 states, Canadian and Mexican states and provinces, and four Indian tribes (Southern Ute, Campo Band of Mission Indians, Acoma Pueblo, and the Gila River Indian Community).

The final day of the conference was devoted primarily to global warming, a challenge that falls especially hard on tribes, from its immediate impacts on subsistence communities to the cultural and spiritual ramifications of changing world and regional ecosystems. Bob Gough described the efforts of his organization, Native Wind, to support a growing wind-turbine network in the northern Plains, and he discussed economic benefits that should come to tribal communities as the project evolves. Bob Gruenig of the National Tribal Environmental Council reviewed his efforts in the halls of Congress to ensure that tribes are well represented in “cap-and-trade” legislation now under consideration. EPA’s Neelam Patel described the agency’s “Climate Showcase Communities” grants and ways that tribes can take advantage of that funding. She also offered details on federally sponsored climate-change adaptation programs, such as EPA’s guide to coping with “excessive heat events” expected as average temperatures rise, and the “Climate-Ready Estuaries” program that addresses adaptation plans for coastal areas.

There’s little question that climate change presents one of the most significant contemporary threats to tribal cultures and progress. Events such as the National Tribal Forum provide crucial opportunities for climate-change discussion and problem-solving. We hope you’ll join us at next year’s NTF to further explore this pressing issue.

-FORUM from page 2-

presenters described a number of climate change-related support programs available to assist Alaska Natives and other tribes. The final day of the conference was devoted largely to global warming impacts and response strategies and featured presentations by tribal members, federal staff, and nongovernmental organization representatives on the challenges of climate change and steps being taken to mitigate and adapt to its likely ecosystem and cultural impacts.

Participants worked hard during the conference, but they also had opportunities to play. Two forum-sponsored gatherings brought attendees together for food, singing and drumming, awards presentations, and spontaneous outbreaks of karaoke. Informal gatherings in hotel rooms and local nightspots contributed to the community-building among tribal and other attendees.

The 2009 Forum’s success was clearly due to the presence of a motivated, knowledgeable group of environmental professionals willing to generously share their expertise and ideas, further strengthening a community that grows more cohesive each year.

We hope everyone who attended this year’s event gained something of value to take home, and we look forward to our next National Tribal Forum in June 2010.
**Upcoming AIAQTP Courses**

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For updates and additional information, please visit our website at [www4.nau.edu/itep/trainings/](http://www4.nau.edu/itep/trainings/).

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**EPA's Indian Program Manager Discusses Funding for Tribal Air Management**

Darrel Harmon is the Senior Indian Program Manager with U.S. EPA's Office of Air and Radiation (OAR). That division of EPA provides much of the air funding to EPA Regions to support tribal air programs. Harmon’s input with senior EPA officials helps set tribal funding allocations. At the NTF, Harmon sat down with ITEP’s editor, Dennis Wall, for a wide-ranging discussion on how OAR addresses tribal air-management needs on the national and regional levels. The following are excerpts from that conversation.

**How does EPA determine tribal funding priorities?**

We look at funding to the Regions to support tribal air programs in several different ways. To determine tribal priorities, we have regular phone meetings of the Indian Program Policy Council, made up of Deputy Regional and Assistant Administrators. The priorities come from Regional staff, based on their contacts and day-to-day workings with the tribes. Our short-term goals right now, on the national level, are indoor air quality, tribal New Source Review, and compliance with environmental regulations in Indian country. For the tribes, that means getting the support and training to take on whatever air quality problems they have. Five years out, I have little doubt that climate change will be the number one issue.

These are not “EPA priorities.” Unlike our relationship with the states, where we set priorities and they’re required to address them, Indian tribes are sovereign entities. The priorities come from the tribes—or rather, from those tribal members who let us know what’s going on. That’s why it’s crucial for tribes to work with the Regions. If you’re not talking with your Regions, they won’t know what to bring to the national level. I wouldn’t say they’re getting the information from somewhere else, but they are getting it from the tribes they hear from, so it’s very important that tribal air staff talk to their Regions.

**How do the three priorities you mention apply to specific tribes?**

These are general priorities. Within the Regions there are all sorts of different issues. For example, in Region 1, high priorities are getting TIP (Tribal Implementation Plan) issues addressed for the Mohegan and Pequot tribes; for Region 7 priorities include mercury monitoring and energy projects. For others, priorities include children’s health and emissions inventories. Addressing tribal priorities is a complex issue, and it’s different than with the states; again, tribes decide their own priorities, though if we identify a problem on a reservation, we’re obligated to address it, as we’ve done with FIPs [Federal Implementation Plans] in some instances.

Please describe the process you follow for dispersing funding for tribal air programs.

Our general funding approach is —[see FUNDING on page 6](#)
Panelists opening the conference included (l. to r.) Mehrdad Khatibi, ITEP Interim Director; Bill Thompson, Penobscot AQ Program Manager; Cheryl Newton, EPA Region 5 Air Division Director; and Philip Shopodock, Forest County Potawatomi Tribal Chairman.

EPA TAMS Center Co-director Farshid Farsi is a familiar face to many in the tribal air community.

Grand Portage AQ Specialist Stuart Oberg entertained the crowd at an evening gathering with his singular karaoke stylings.

Diné tribal member and Northern Arizona University student Julaire Scott is this year's recipient of the Virgil Masayesva Native American Environmental Education Scholarship Award.

Singers Charles Wood III (left) and Gary Ethie performed traditional songs at an evening gathering of conference participants.

Steve Crawford, Environmental Director for the Passamoquoddy tribe in Maine, shared his alternative-energy programs and efforts.

ITEP staff member Christy Nations presents gifts to Potawatomi elder Billie Daniels Jr.

Elizabeth Hoffmann offered a touching personal perspective on indoor air quality, sharing with NTF participants her struggle with cancer she believes resulted from radon exposure in her home.

Panelists left to Right: Syndi Smallwood, Pechanga; Charlene Nelson, Diné; Joy Wiecks, Fond du Lac; and Laura McKelvey, U.S. EPA Tribal Program.

Native Images from National Tribal Forum 2009

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Steve Crawford, Environmental Director for the Passamoquoddy tribe in Maine, shared his alternative-energy programs and efforts.
sort of a three-scale system: first, we provide some funding just because tribes exist and therefore deserve support. That scale has to do with how many tribes there are, how many residents they have, etc. And, basic capacity building is a value. Second, we look at what we can identify and measure, such as nonattainment, number of major sources, things like that, sort of the “risk” side of things. Third, we reward the Regions—remember, this funding goes to Regions rather than individual tribes—for what they’re getting done, such as tribes taking delegation, starting programs, issuing permits. So the third “scale” is essentially rewarding success.

We’re trying to provide a broad net of support, and to address individual problems at the individual level, providing support through training, technical support, and policy assistance, such as the National Tribal Air Association provides.

**Given this three-scale system, why list tribal priorities?**

Determining priorities helps us address funding at the national level. It helps us express what our most important goals are, and it helps in finding resources to support tribal priorities. We try to match tribal priorities with EPA’s priorities, so hopefully we’re all going along the same path, which isn’t always the case. It can be a complicated system. We need to make sure we’re paying attention to what tribes are saying.

**How is U.S. EPA different than it was before the recent election?**

Well, as our new Administrator [Lisa Jackson] has said, this is “a new EPA.” The leadership, I think, intends to change us to meet what the new administration wants from us. A big part of that is transparency. And they want stakeholders—and here we need to include the tribes as co-regulators—involved. I think this administration’s intention is to make sure everyone is at the table and has a chance to provide input. Tribes are building capacity, and I think they’re able to participate much more effectively than in the past. Now that they’ll have more opportunities to provide input, hopefully we’ll get that input.
As the Fond du Lac Band of Lake Superior Chippewa’s Air Quality Technician, Joy Wiecks, explained to NTF conference-goers, retrofitting tribal diesel-powered vehicles (installing pollution-control exhausts to engines) can present challenges that go far beyond simple engineering.

In 2007, when Region 5 notified the tribe (located in Minnesota) that $25,000 in grant money was available for “community diesel retrofit” programs, the Fond du Lac tribe immediately submitted a funding request. Then came bureaucratic delays, temporary loss of the money to Homeland Security projects, staff turnover, and, finally, when the funding was actually available to the tribe, the imposition of a six-month deadline for completing the retrofits.

The tribe quickly deliberated on which vehicles they might want to refit under the program. Their schoolbus fleet was an obvious possibility, but Fond du Lac’s busses had already been retrofitted under “Project Green Fleet,” funded by the tribe’s Headstart program. They settled on construction vehicles for three reasons: the department had enough vehicles to make the effort worthwhile, extensive construction was presently underway on the reservation, and dealing with a single department’s fleet minimized logistical challenges.

Mary Munn, the Air Program Coordinator, circulated RFPs and a vendor was selected and approved by the tribal government. They settled on construction vehicles for three reasons: the department had enough vehicles to make the effort worthwhile, extensive construction was presently underway on the reservation, and dealing with a single department’s fleet minimized logistical challenges.

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The process involved installing “DOC” mufflers, a diesel oxidation catalyst muffler, similar to a catalytic converter. The work required increasing the bracing strength to support the heavier mufflers and, for one vehicle, cutting away part of the hood to make room for the updated equipment.

Some of the problems they encountered with the retrofitting included: mufflers mounted above engine hoods made accessing the engine for maintenance difficult; construction staff reported that the vendor was difficult to contact for support after the initial installations; and at times, the crew was sometimes unable to cope with the added complications of the new equipment—one muffler was ripped off and reinstalled after crews realized it was melting hydraulic hoses. “There were some inconveniences with the retrofits,” Wiecks said, “but nothing that was a huge problem.”

Wiecks said the project has been successful, particularly considering they’ve seen significant reductions in emissions close to Fond du Lac’s tribal school. Equipment operators have not reported any loss of horsepower in the machines that were retrofitted with the new equipment.

Some of the lessons the air staff learned in the process of shaping and administering the program:

• Retrofits work best with vehicles that were manufactured after 2004 and don’t burn oil.
• It’s important to stay flexible on which and how many vehicles to retrofit, and reserve the right to accept or reject any vendor proposals.
• It’s usually best to schedule retrofits for the off-season.
• Using a brand-related vendor might yield better support after the sale.

For more information on Fond du Lac’s retrofit program, contact Mary Munn at marymunn@fdlrez.com or Joy Wiecks at joywiecks@fdlrez.com.
At first glance, the close linkage between climate change and solid waste recycling might seem less than obvious. But as Syndi Smallwood pointed out at the NTF, the two are intimately connected. Smallwood, Environmental Director for the Pechanga Band of Luiseño Indians, described her tribe’s dynamic recycling program, how it started small but quickly took off to process much of the southern California reservation’s waste stream. In the process the air staff learned lessons that could be of value to anyone considering a similar program.

She pointed out numerous links between climate change and solid waste. Among others, creating hard goods requires industrial processes, most of which create air pollution, including carbon dioxide; transportation of goods produces more; processing of forest products reduces the natural carbon sequestration that trees provide; and landfills emit methane and other gases. Methane, Smallwood points out, is 21 times more potent a Greenhouse Gas (GHG) than carbon dioxide.

Aware of these and other ecological impacts of the “waste cycle” (the entire loop from processing raw materials, creating products, using them, and discarding them), Pechanga embarked in January 2008 on what began as a small-scale recycling program. The voluntary effort was organized with Chammakilawish School and included the government center and tribal casino. Every two weeks, students would pick up cans, bottles, glass, mixed paper, and plastics and carry it to outside bins for pickup.

For two months all went well, but the amount of recycled material put out for collection soon overwhelmed the students. Then summer came and there were no students to do the collecting, so the environmental staff was forced to take over. Eventually the tribe hired someone to pick up the recycled material once each week.

Others on the reservation decided to join in, and council approval was required to pay for more bins. Printer cartridges and batteries from various operations joined the mix. As interest swelled, the staff came up with a list of recycleable products useful in various tribal operations, such as pens, binders, and utensils made from corn products. Then the maintenance department got involved, and the staff was soon accepting about anything people brought in, from tires and light bulbs to junk cars, microwave ovens, and computers.

Old refrigerators dumped at random were picked up for metal recycling, and people began calling and asking the program staff to “get rid of their junk.” The casino staff, already doing basic recycling, decided they wanted to do more. They created a “Green Team,” in consultation with the Environmental Department, and now recycle numerous items, from lights from gaming machines to LEDs used in a variety of activities. The hotel and resort, recently named in the Washington Post as one of the nation’s "Best Green Hotels," now recycles items that include metal food cans, steel and aluminum, plastic scrap, and other items. “It’s really getting big,” Smallwood says.

Lessons they learned in the process included the need for a careful waste-characterization study before launching a program; in tribal outreach efforts, the importance of engaging young people; and the PR importance of highlighting various benefits of recycling, including economic savings, goodwill for businesses, and job creation.

Pechanga’s successful recycling program has inspired the tribe to do even more, and now they’re looking at other projects, such as composting, swapping out inefficient appliances in favor of Energy Star-certified items, and using solar energy and biofuels in some tribal operations. For more information, contact Syndi at smallwood@pechanga-nsn.gov.
Indoor Air Quality in the Nation's Icebox

You can’t build just anywhere,” says Kevin Koski, Environmental Health Specialist for the Bois Forte Band of Chippewa in northeastern Minnesota. “But people try.”

Bois Forte lies amid what is widely (and proudly) regarded as the coldest region in the U.S. In 2000, the tribe became aware of mold problems in some tribal homes; the level of upper respiratory illness was also increasing among members.

The Bois Forte reservation is fortunate in having minimal ambient-air pollution. However, when it gets cold here, you’re talking forty below. Some areas among the tribe’s five major communities are relatively suitable for wood-and-sheetrock structures, Koski says, but when houses underperform against moisture and cold, the two factors can conspire to create major indoor air quality (IAQ) problems.

At the 2009 National Tribal Forum, Koski offered attendees a comprehensive overview of Bois Forte’s IAQ efforts, which began in earnest in 2000 when they obtained EPA Section 103 funding to address the issue. Despite high staff turnover in the ensuing years, IAQ work conducted by the tribe’s Environmental Services division would soon make them a “Center of Excellence” for environmental work in EPA Region 5, and, as NTF attendees noted, experts in home remediation.

Nine Bois Forte families were relocated due to IAQ issues, and by spring of 2001, the tribe had commenced 35 home remediation projects. Addressing IAQ across the reservation, Koski said, required a flexible approach, as each home and community presented unique challenges. In boggy lowland areas, for example, waterproofing basements is a major challenge. Referring to one of the tribe’s communities, he said, “A wood foundation home in Palmquist Village works fine, but at Lake Vermilion, where the soil is clay with rocks and drainage is bad, sheetrock basements and wood foundations fail.”

He described in details “pet projects” the tribe has taken on to address IAQ threats. “Wood is designed to drink up water,” he noted, pointing to basement and crawlspace issues at Bois Forte. Dirt crawlspace are difficult to deal with, and in this region, he said, they’re best to avoid from the start. Slabs are much easier to maintain and seal against moisture and soil gas. He feels that installing vapor barriers is an "after-the-fact solution" rather than a proactive one.

Pests can be another vexing issue; if houses are not well designed and sealed, rodents will invade, tunneling through and nesting in insulation material and degrading the integrity of a home. Bois Forte’s Environmental Services department utilizes infrared thermography (see photo) to locate cold spots that result from mouse tunneling.

Ventilation and air-tightness represent another major focus of the department’s work. Old houses with bad bathroom fans commonly suffer from mold and moisture-related structural damage. “If you get moisture out of the air,” he said, “there’s nothing to condense in the trouble spots.”

“Mold spores can be 1000 times more prevalent in the air during remediation,” Koski pointed out, and high cancer rates have been linked to abatement work—dead mold spores are as damaging to human health as live ones. He emphasized the need for remediation staff to don safety-gear such as Tyvec suits and masks or respirators. To enhance safety, he recommends “slowing down and bagging material up” when working on mold issues, as well as using HEPA machines to create negative air containment (pressurizing spaces to keep air in desired locations) to control dust. “ShopVacs aren’t a good option,” he insisted, “and dousing with bleach is just not healthy.”

Dealing with building contractors, Koski told the NTF audience, sometimes tries the staff’s patience—he noted that in the previous year, for example, he’d “fought” with ten contractors, urging them to correct problems they’d caused during construction. Some contractor-built tribal homes, he said, suffered three to five times more air leakage than Minnesota’s building code allows. Staff reported finding bags stuffed into holes in sheetrock in lieu of repairs, lack of crawlspace insulation, missing vapor barriers, and a host of other issues.

Koski recommended that one efficient way to address IAQ problems is under the umbrella of “asthma.”

For example, HUD’s “Healthy Homes” project sometimes provides funding for remediation of homes occupied by asthmatics, as does Minnesota’s “Communities Reducing Environmental Triggers of Asthma” project.

For more information on building remediation, contact Kevin at kkoski@boisforte-nsn.gov.
Excellence Honored at NTF 2009

Forest County Potawatomi Community’s environmental staff received two awards at the NTF. The 2009 Virgil Masayesva Environmental Excellence Award was presented to the tribe for outstanding work in environmental management and activism. Also, Attorney General Jeff Crawford was presented with a certificate from ITEP’s TAMS Center Steering Committee, honoring his work to gain Class I airshed designation status for the Potawatomi Community.

The National Tribal Air Association also recognized former NTAA executive committee member, Sam Kitto for his work with the organization, and Bob Gruenig of the National Tribal Environmental Council for his tireless advocacy in the halls of Congress on behalf of the tribes.

Potawatomi Community award winners (left to right): Joe Cebe, Air Monitoring Specialist; Natalene Cummings, Air Program Director; and Jeff Crawford, the tribe’s Attorney General.

If you’d like to receive an e-copy of Native Voices rather than a paper copy, please contact Lydia at Lydia.Scheer@nau.edu.