IAQ at Saint Regis: Getting to the Source

After seventeen years of addressing indoor air quality issues at the Saint Regis Mohawk (Akwesasne) Tribe in New York state, Angela Benedict has pretty much seen it all, including layers of dead bats inside a wall, asbestos-laced drying agents used to soak up moisture in a resident’s basement, and one remarkably beautiful mushroom growing at the base of a bathtub in a tribal home.

The mushroom, says Benedict, “was gorgeous. We kept it for a long time. The spores were really pretty, all pink and yellowish.” What that beauteous chunk of fungus represented, of course, was not quite so attractive: mold, a major IAQ villain. She found the fungus growing at the edge of a bathtub in a home that had been absent its residents for awhile. The growth revealed that water had been leaking around the base of the tub. “Moisture in homes here isn’t uncommon,” she says.

“I had mushrooms growing near my own bathtub once because of a leaky faucet.”

Over the many years Benedict has been with her tribe’s air department, she and her colleagues have responded to an average of about a dozen homeowner complaints each year. Tribal indoor-air issues come to their awareness in different ways. Homeowners will call with an issue, or the tribal Housing Authority will report a problem. When a complaint comes in, she or her colleague Marlene Thompson go out and investigate. The air department doesn’t perform any repairs or upgrades. Rather, they investigate, generate a report, and leave it to homeowners to arrange repairs.

The Real Problem with Mold is Moisture

Water leakage and other structural issues are the usual source of mold growth in homes. But Saint Regis also faces endemic challenges that are tough to avoid. A shallow water table—in some areas water rises to within a few feet of the surface, or less, can become channels for moisture intrusion. She says the high water table plays havoc at times with septic systems. “I’ve actually taken a shovel and dug up someone’s septic system,” she says, “to show that the engineer was mistaken about the source of a problem.”

National Tribal Forum 2013

Registration for the 2013 National Tribal Forum is now underway. This yearly event, co-sponsored by ITEP and the National Tribal Air Association, brings together tribal air professionals from around the nation, along with federal, state, and non-government experts on air quality for a comprehensive symposium on tribal air issues.

Location and Information
Radisson Fort McDowell Resort and Casino
Fountain Hills, AZ (Phoenix Metro area)
April 30–May 2, 2013

see NTF 2013 on page 4
Happy new year from all of us at ITEP! I hope your holidays were filled with rest and good cheer.

As we begin the new year, I want to begin by congratulating three ITEP staff members for their awards and accomplishments. First, Christy Nations was honored with the 2012 Cal Seciwa Award for her long service in support of tribal environmental progress. Christy was ITEP’s first staff member after Virgil Masayesva and Bill Auberle launched the Institute. She’s been a tireless supporter of all of ITEP’s many activities, she’s well known in the tribal air community, and no one is more deserving of this award. We’re all proud of you, Christy.

Next is Carol Seumptewa, who has been with us nearly from ITEP’s launch in 1992, was awarded an NAU President’s Achievement Award “for excelling in her professional role, promoting a positive sense of community in the workplace and actively supporting the mission of Northern Arizona University.” Carol continues to be an invaluable employee at ITEP. Congratulations, Carol.

One more congratulations is in order. ITEP’s Climate Change Program Coordinator, Sue Wotkyns, took on a major task over the past year, volunteering to serve as co-author on a tribal chapter for the 2013 National Climate Change Assessment. The comprehensive report, which this federal interagency group publishes every four years, is now in its final comment phase and will be released later this year. The assessment is an important resource on the impacts of climate change in the U.S. When the previous report came out in 2009, tribes were not included. Sue’s hard work has helped to change that. We’re all proud of Sue for some first-rate work.

ITEP continues to move forward with new and existing programs to assist tribal environmental staff. One important change is now currently in development at the Tribal Air Monitoring Support (TAMS) Center in Las Vegas, NV, where the TAMS Center partners, EPA and NAU-ITEP, are developing a Memorandum of Understanding. This MOU will clarify the roles and responsibilities of all of the TAMS partners which include the U.S. EPA’s newly named National Center for Radiation Field Operations (NCRFO), the U.S EPA Office of Air Quality Planning and Standards (OAQPS), and NAU-ITEP. One significant effect to the TAMS Center’s operation is that the TAMS Center EPA Co-Director Farshid Farsi will now report directly to Ron Fraass, the NCRFO Director. This change promises to streamline decision-making and should benefit tribal environmental professionals who draw upon TAMS services.

Since its launch in October of 2012, ITEP’s Tribal Clean Energy Resource Center (TCERC) has continued to develop at a rapid pace. TCERC was established to assist tribes in their transition from traditional to clean energy development. In December, the TCERC hosted a workshop entitled, “Tribal Sustainable Construction.” The audience included tribal energy, environmental and housing staff; experts on energy-related topics; and regulators and other government officials charged with overseeing and assisting tribes in their energy-development efforts. The all-day event explored a wide range of issues related to sustainable construction in Indian country. Some 75 people attended the gathering, where they discussed topics that included energy efficiency, funding, federal support of tribal energy efforts and other areas of interest to tribes (see the article in this issue). Future workshops in the series will address topics based on...
Telling Your Story: Gathering and Using Air Quality Information for Your Community

At ITEP’s recent workshop on how tribes can effectively participate in the State Implementation Plan (SIP) process, EPA Community and Tribal Programs Group manager, Laura McKelvey, led a discussion titled “Telling Your Community’s Story.” The session was designed to encourage dialogue about the mechanisms available to tribal air staff for better influencing states in cases where off-reservation sources might be impacting a reservation’s airshed.

Gathering information on air quality impacts to your community and building relationships are two critical elements in the process, and the general principles of a tribe’s SIP efforts can be applied more widely. Data can include air quality monitoring, but other kinds of information can support a tribe’s ability to tell its story. These include emissions inventories, health information, information about ecosystems, and cultural values that are important to a tribal community.

McKelvey points out that “having good information on air issues that impact your community can help ensure you have a seat at a lot of tables—for example when you’re commenting on a permit. It can really increase your credibility.” Having good info can also aid in the formulation of tribal air ordinances, community air-quality action plans, and outreach and education efforts. Grant applications to address air-related issues can benefit from this kind of information. Having good data on the prevalence of asthma in the community, for example, might help facilitate a grant award for a woodstove change-out or an upgrade to an incinerator.

Linking to Information and Resources

McKelvey emphasizes the importance of building relationships at all levels as an effective starting point for your info-gathering process. Such links begin at the staff level—having a strong team is crucial in any effort. Building political and organizational partnerships, such as with environmental groups, businesses, and tribal organizations can also be valuable. Developing and strengthening partnerships not only with environmental staff but with health, business, and other organizations on the reservation can pay off by enhancing communication and access to information that might otherwise be held back for various reasons. Likewise, partnering with other tribes has been invaluable to many tribes who share expertise, knowledge, and technical assistance.

Partnerships with county and state entities can significantly reduce your time demands when you’re seeking air-related information. Even where there are political issues between the state and the tribe(s), partnerships at the technical and staff levels can help build trust and credibility and can help support tribal participation in the SIP process. A Region’s EPA Operations staff can help by providing contacts, tools and data. Regional staff often have access to training resources you can tap into as well as knowledge of RFPs you might not have considered. On the national level, EPA staff (such as McKelvey) often have access to, or can ease your pursuit of, trends reports, area-source data, EIs, permit and source compliance information, and other valuable resources.

Partnering implies that each partner is contributing to the other’s success, so it’s important to keep the resources flowing both ways, to the extent possible. If the state is monitoring near your reservation, having access to that data can be helpful in your information-gathering process, and offering tribal assistance where

See TELLING YOUR STORY on page 6
surveys of the workshop’s participants. If you are involved in tribal energy issues, we hope you will consider attending upcoming workshops.

ITEP’s internship program under the Environmental Education Outreach Program is now overseeing the U.S. Department of Energy Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory internship program in California, a major center for advanced technology and research. This internship is designed to provide Native college students with opportunities to explore new frontiers in energy development and other high technology. The program will be managed by ITEP Sr. Instructional Specialist Graylynn Hudson. You can reach her at graylynn.hudson@nau.edu, phone 928-523-8864.

Next, I am excited to announce that First Stewards, an international climate-change organization on whose board I serve, is now planning its second symposium the last week of October 2013 in Washington DC. This organization was created to explore and develop solutions for impacts of climate change on Native communities and Pacific Islanders, including subsistence and social and cultural impacts. I will have more to share with you on the symposium as planning moves forward. You can learn more about First Stewards by visiting following link: http://firststewards.org.

On the national political front, several cabinet members in the Obama administration have announced they will be leaving their positions soon. Lisa Jackson, head of U.S. EPA, will be moving on early this year, and Secretary of the Interior, Ken Salazar, recently announced that he will resign in March. Both have been strong supporters of Indian tribes and friends of ITEP. ITEP thanks them for their support and look forward to working with the new cabinet members.

Happy 2013, I wish the very best in the new year. As always, we continue to seek new opportunities to better serve you. Please share your thoughts and needs with us.

NTF topic areas will include climate change, technical skills development, health impacts of air pollution, indoor air quality, tribal case studies, funding resources, federal regulatory updates and information, and a popular EPA “listening session” that offers tribal air professionals the chance to engage directly with high-level EPA officials.

Breakout sessions throughout the three-day event provide attendees with opportunities to explore topics across the spectrum of tribal air concerns, including technical issues, Alaska Native air concerns, indoor air challenges and solutions, and many other topics of interest to tribes.

A big advantage for NTF attendees is the chance to network with other tribal air staff and create informal connections that have proven immensely valuable to veteran “airheads” and newcomers alike.

This year’s Forum will feature a keynote address by Milton Bluehouse Jr., a noted tribal consultant who has worked on a variety of environmental issues, including conflict mediation and strategic planning. Field trips to the Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community’s air-monitoring site, BioSphere2 and other nearby areas of interest to air professionals, will take place just before the conference begins.

If you’re an old NTF hand, we look forward to seeing you again. If you’re new to the tribal air community, we welcome you and promise you’ll find the Forum to be an important resource as you develop your skills and build professional relationships.

For more information or to register for this event, please visit the NTF webpage at: http://www4.nau.edu/itep/conferences/confir_ntf.asp

The registration fee for this year’s NTF is $100. Attendees are responsible for the cost of travel and lodging; the host hotel will provide a special rate for attendees. A limited number of scholarships are available to defray travel and lodging costs.

For more information, contact Lydia Scheer at lydia.scheer@nau.edu, or call her at 928-523-6887.
Home-construction practices that are sometimes employed on the 1600-resident reservation, says Benedict, can also cause problems. She says norms for construction at Saint Regis don’t always work to the homeowner’s advantage. “The lowest bid isn’t always the best bid,” she says. “That’s been an issue. You save money up-front, but not always in the long run.” If wood-foundation homes are not properly filled and moisture-controlled, for example, “the foundation acts like a wick, and then you’ve got a house full of mold.”

Mold reveals its presence in a few standard ways. The occupant sees it—either in the open or when they tear a cabinet or drywall down during a renovation; they smell it; or they experience health-related issues and request an analysis. “Those can be pretty vague complaints,” she says of the latter. “It could be ‘My child has asthma,’ or ‘It’s really hot in here.’” Intuition, based on long experience, plays a big part in her approach. “Usually every home has some issue,” she says. “If someone is feeling poorly when they’re home and they complain to us, we’ll probably find some problem. Once they fix it, they need to decide if that solved it. If not, they might have to consider their health or other things.”

One such homeowner complaint, of excessive heat in the home, which resulted from the under-floor heating system in a tribal home having been punctured during installation. It had been leaking ever since—for about ten years.

The air staff generally advises residents to clean mold with soap, water, and elbow grease. “It isn’t recommended anymore to use bleach or other chemicals,” she says, “because they can be more toxic than mold.” Although she herself is sensitive to mold—and has been forced to leave homes in the past because of her reactions—she isn’t overly concerned about its toxicity. “Everyone has a different sensitivity,” she says. “Some can sit in a vat of mold and have no reaction, and others can be exposed to a small patch and have an attack. But I don’t think of the mold itself as the problem; it’s the humidity in the home. Outside you get millions of mold spores; they’re flying around everywhere. That’s one of my pet peeves, that mold is so dangerous, that it’s going to eat your brain.

“Of course, if it gets too thick in an enclosed space, it can be a problem—it is for me sometimes. It’s definitely been shown to aggravate asthma and allergies. Whether it causes them or not, I can’t be sure.”

Benedict has taken drastic action in a few extreme mold infestations. In one case she advocated for a resident with twin babies (both of whom later developed asthma) to have their home moved off its old, mold-friendly foundation and refitted onto a moisture-sealed base; other fixes were also necessary for the home, such as ceiling and wall repairs. Because the air department doesn’t offer construction assistance, she helped the homeowner get the work done through the tribe’s Home Improvement Program.

**Tools of the IAQ Trade**

One of their main instruments for ferreting out problems is the Indoor Air Quality Surveyor, a hand-held device that measures relative humidity, carbon monoxide, carbon dioxide, temperature, and other parameters, depending on the model. Such devices range in price from a couple of hundred dollars to thousands, based on the types of measurements they perform and their level of sensitivity.

“The Surveyor is easy to learn,” Benedict says. “Turn it on and read the numbers. Really, knowing what the numbers should be is the main thing: that CO should be down around zero, and not 100–200ppm. And relative humidity percentages shouldn’t be too high or low.” Excessively low humidity, she says, can create IAQ problems, too. If there’s already mold, dust or other contaminants in the home—even such toxins as lead from oxidized paint—extra-dry air allows the substance to fly freely about, to be breathed into residents’ lungs.
possible can help keep the link strong. Environmental groups can be a good resource for tribes, as they can sometimes share policy analysis and technical support.

One participant at the ITEP course pointed out that emergency management agencies can be crucial partners: “A lot of people forget,” he said, “that just about every disaster becomes environmental at some point. And disasters don’t know what fee land is or what trust land is, and they don’t care.”

Indoor air quality data is not included in SIPs, but it’s good data to gather and have available, and not only to help accurately describe air impacts on the community. “IAQ can be a good place from which to start building relationships, and to find additional resources,” McKelvey says. For example, your state might have IAQ grant funding to offer, and federal agencies, such as HUD, might also have funding for efforts such as woodstove change-outs. Connecting with others involved in IAQ can sometimes lead you to other resources, such as training. For those kinds of reasons, says McKelvey, “making connections with your housing folks can be a good thing.”

**Finding the Facts**

Obvious information sources on air issues include tribal emissions inventories, attainment status of yours and nearby airsheds, data from the national Air Quality System database, monitoring data from your own monitors and those of nearby entities, and community health information. The National Emissions Inventory (NEI) is another good source for information on pollutants that impact your community.

Gathering comprehensive information for air-quality purposes encompasses categories that at first might not be obvious. A good example is demographic data. The National Air Toxics Assessment, for example, includes a “census block” that breaks down Cancer and Non-Cancer Risks. It’s easy to see how area emissions could contribute to risks; less obvious is data such as the number of elderly and children on the reservation—both tend to be more susceptible to harm from toxic emissions. The age of reservation housing can be crucial because homes built before 1970 often contain lead, which can become airborne as well as being ingested directly. Data on heating sources can tell you a lot about indoor-air risks for asthma and other breathing problems.

“A good question,” McKelvey says, “is, ‘What’s different about your community from the state in general?’ This often gets to how a community is able to respond to existing pollution.” For example, does your community have a hospital or clinic? Is there transportation to get an ailing resident to the hospital? Do you have access to clean water? A functional sewage facility? What is the unemployment level? Income can be an important data point, because incomes often relate to the access community members have to a number of health- and safety-related services.

GIS can be an effective tool for helping you gather air-quality information in your area. Learning to conduct or read air-pollution modeling data can tell you a lot about how sources are impacting the community. Glenn Gehring, ITEP’s Technical Specialist at the TAMS Center, provides training on “backward trajectory” analysis, which can help you track the sources of pollution on the reservation.

McKelvey pointed out that numerous websites can be tapped to gather air information. That includes general health-related data—though getting community-level info might not be easy due to HIPA privacy policies that the Indian Health Service and other agencies must follow. Depending on your relationship with community health staff, you might obtain access to data on patient admissions, for example, on days when ozone or PM levels are high—or the health staff might be willing to track that kind of data for you.

Gathering air-quality data can be a time-consuming and tedious process, but the value of having that information can make all the effort worth it. Knowledge of your community’s air quality can help you set priorities and effectively deal with the real issues impacting your fellow citizens. And when dealing with other entities on air quality issues, knowledge is power.
NOW THAT YOU’VE GOT IT: Using Community Air Quality Information

Much of the ITEP SIP course segment on “Telling Your Community’s Story” involved brainstorming by participants on both gathering and using air-quality information. The following are some of their comments and suggestions:

- Get familiar with informational websites that address your issues
- Get on mailing lists, such as for county and state air agencies, environmental groups, and others who deal with air issues
- Take a GIS training course
- Know or learn how to read and interpret your tribe’s EI (emissions inventory)
- Get training to fill any gaps you might have. ITEP is a primary source for such training. Other training is available through state agencies, environmental organizations, and federal agencies
- Make sure you know where your tribal council stands regarding their willingness to address various air issues
- Learn more about—and the differences between—TIPs, SIPs and FIPs
- Prioritize community needs based on the information you’ve gathered
- Community health information generally indicates trends rather than clear links between air quality and specific health conditions. McKelvey cautions, “You can’t really say this asthma attack or that case of cancer is specifically tied to this pollutant.” She advises that when you present community health data, it’s important not to “oversell” it. “That can undermine your credibility.”
- Create an informational video to share with the community
- Conduct community-education events to share what you’ve learned and create buy-in for issues you might choose to address
- Engage kids in your efforts—children can dramatically impact family practices, steps that families take to protect their health, and political action in which they’re willing to engage

Contact Laura at: McKelvey.Laura@epa.gov
They also use a non-destructive moisture meter to check baseboards, drywall, and other structural components.

**Combustion and Health**

Although moisture is the primary culprit in Saint Regis home-air problems, other issues arise, some of which can be considerably more dangerous. Carbon monoxide is a serious threat wherever it exists. It’s often found in homes with aging wood- or gas-fueled stoves. “Some people who have propane stoves,” she says, “don’t always understand that they need a vent over the stove that goes to the outside, so if anything happens it doesn’t shoot CO, or CO2, back into the home. Most have the recycling type of vent, which brings air back into the home but doesn’t remove the combustion products.”

She offers two pieces of advice to homeowners with stove issues: If the appliance is fairly new, get it fixed. If it’s old, don’t even bother with repairs, because they often cost as much as replacing the unit with a better, more efficient unit.

Carbon monoxide (CO) is, of course, far more dangerous than its “cousin” carbon dioxide (CO2), which at very high levels can impact a space mainly by replacing available oxygen; CO2 levels can rise fairly high without creating noticeable problems. The main reason for measuring CO2 is to help determine whether sufficient outdoor air is being drawn into the home.

But outdoor air that comes into a space needs to be healthy air. Knowing the location of air intakes is an important part of the clean-air mix. Vents situated too close to parking spaces or vehicle-idling spots can draw pollutants in—including deadly, odorless CO. Benedict herself was once evacuated from an air quality conference in Washington DC, when an idling truck parked too near the conference room’s air intake raised the CO to dangerous levels.

**Indoor Air Quality and Noise**

A not-so-obvious “IAQ” issue is noise, which can raise stress, disrupt home activities and decrease sleep time and quality. The air department has fielded more than one call due to noise complaints, which they’ve traced with the help of a noise meter to a nearby generator running around the clock and an electric fan running at a local tobacco-drying facility. As with other IAQ issues, the air staff simply uncovers the problem; at that point it’s up to the afflicted home dweller to address the issue, through whatever negotiation and persuasion skills they can summon to their cause.

**Outreach and Prevention**

The air staff complement direct investigation with IAQ education and outreach to the community. Each year they conduct a Wellness event around Earth Day that brings health professionals and staff from the environmental department together to interact with the public. “We get about 600 people out for those events,” Benedict says. “It’s a really great way to get the word out.”

To educate the community, she also writes regular articles on indoor air for the tribal newsletter. “I’ve only missed about two months of articles over the past two years,” she says. “I cover everything I can come up with: different house plants that can be good for air quality, mold, indoor-air cleaners, toxins from plastic toys, ventilation and air movement—anything that pops into my head. I’ll be doing one soon on different types of lighting and how that can affect productivity.”

**It’s Always Something**

Any number of issues have arisen in Benedict’s air quality work, but perhaps nothing was more off-the-wall than the complaint she got from a resident about “white dots that seemed to be falling from the sky,” accompanied by a “sewer smell” around the home. She went out to investigate and found the culprit was a massive stinkbug invasion in the trees around the house. “We get calls like that sometimes, too.”

After all her years addressing IAQ issues, Benedict has learned that one of the most sensitive instruments for determining whether a home has an air-quality issue is the homeowner him/herself. “If you feel okay when you’re out of the home,” she says, “and then you go home and an hour later you’re feeling lousy, that’s a pretty good clue something is going on in your home.”
The Institute for Tribal Environmental Professionals is seeking college students for two summer internship programs—the EPA-funded Student Summer Internship Program and the Department of Energy Internship Program.

College students participating in ITEP’s Student Summer Internship Program will spend the summer helping with air quality or climate change projects in tribal communities. Funding is available to place up to eight qualified interns. This year’s available internship sites are located in Alaska, Arizona, California, Idaho, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Nevada, Oregon, and Washington.

To be eligible, participants must be undergraduate or graduate students and U.S. citizens, possess a valid driver’s license, be fulltime enrollees during Spring 2013, and have an environmental or related major. The selected college students will earn a stipend and receive limited housing and travel assistance. Submit an application online at http://www4.nau.edu/eeop/internships/ssi_internship.asp by February 22, 2013.

The Department of Energy Internship Program is a new ITEP program that places American Indian college students at Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory in Livermore, California. Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory has a mission of strengthening the United States’ security through development and application of world-class science and technology.

Funding is available to place up to nine college students enrolled in a science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) undergraduate or graduate program at Northern Arizona University, Arizona State University, or the University of Arizona. A competitive applicant must be a member of a federally recognized tribe, currently enrolled and planning to enroll in classes during fall 2013, and maintaining a cumulative GPA of 3.2 or higher. Those who are selected will be paid a stipend and receive housing and travel funding. Students are encouraged to apply as soon as possible.

For more information about both internship programs, please contact Graylynn Hudson at 928-523-8864 or by email at Graylynn.Hudson@nau.edu.
ITEP’s Energy Program Sponsors First Sustainable Tribal Construction Workshop

In early December, ITEP’s Tribal Clean Energy Resource Center (TCERC) sponsored the first in a series of workshops on sustainable building practices in tribal communities.

The conference, held at NAU’s Native American Center, drew a wide range of professionals among its 75 participants, including staff from tribal housing, environmental protection, construction services, planning, and economic development, as well as nontribal attendees from various disciplines. We’re grateful to all those who took the time to attend this event. We also want to thank those who presented at the workshop.

Presenters included representatives from Enterprise Green Communities, the Yavapai-Apache Nation, Atkin Olshin Schade Architects, JSR Design Studios, the Native Village of Kwinhagak, Inter-Tribal Council of Arizona, the Grand Canyon Trust, and Native Home Capital. Staff from ITEP’s TCERC program presented on ITEP’s new energy program, the partnerships TCERC is developing with other experts and organizations, and internship opportunities and other modes of support that TCERC provides.

Workshop topics covered a diverse list of sustainability issues in Indian country. Talks by workshop presenters covered solar and wind power, energy efficiency, utilities, funding sources, federal tribal housing programs, cultural sensitivity, internships and other topics, including ways in which tribes might pursue integrated, community-level approaches to energy efficiency and sustainability. Because this workshop was the first in a continuing series, participants completed a survey to share their preferences for future workshop topics. Some topics in which they expressed interest were master planning, weatherization, project coordination, and green-design standards. We will develop informational resources on those and other topics in future workshops for this ongoing series.

We encourage tribal housing staff, and anyone else with an interest in sustainable building, to consider attending one or more of these TCERC workshops.

You’ll find more information on ITEP’s TCERC program at http://www4.nau.edu/itep/tcerc/.

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To submit assistance requests and recommendations to ITEP’s energy-program staff, CLICK THIS BOX:

https://www4.nau.edu/itep/forms/form_t cerc_techassist.asp
To celebrate our 20th anniversary in October, ITEP invited friends and colleagues to Northern Arizona University for an all-day gathering. The event, which drew more than 100 people, included a seminar on climate change, a re-signing of the original Memorandum of Understanding between U.S. EPA and NAU that resulted in ITEP’s founding, a keynote address by Native activist Winona LaDuke, and a supper and silent auction at NAU’s Native American Cultural Center. Thanks to all of you who were able to make it to the celebration.

ITEP’s Exec. Director, Ann Marie Chischilly, addresses the crowd. EPA-OAR Deputy Asst. Admin., Janet McCabe, was one of many distinguished guests.

ITEP co-founder Bill Auberle accepts a blanket honoring his service to ITEP and the tribes.

About 100 guests attended the celebration.

Tribal Climate Change Steering Committee members discuss impacts of a changing climate on tribes.

ITEP staffer Christy Nations and EPA/TAMS Co-Director, Farshid Farsi.

From R: Carol Seumptewa, Christy Nations, and Pat Ellsworth receive decorative plates honoring their twenty years with ITEP.

Native American author and activist, Winona LaDuke, spoke on “planting seeds.”

Cherokee Nation Tribal member and noted Indian-law practitioner Dean Suagee.

Juliette Nabahie, ITEP board member and niece of Virgil Masayesva, addresses the crowd.