

Caddo Nation – Fire Crew Perform Archaeological Surveys as Heritage Resources Technicians

Don Motanic, ITC Technical Specialist, Daniel Cain, Forest Service and Gary Parker, Caddo Nation.

The Caddo Nation's Fire Crew Coordinator, Gary Parker has been receiving phone calls after his presentation at the 11th Bridge the Gap Conference held in Durant, Oklahoma during the week of April 2 – 5, 2012. Gary said, "We have been receiving calls from the Forest Service from as far as Illinois and Missouri."



Several U. S. Forest Service participants throughout the nation saw the presentation about the Caddo Nation's Fire Crew performing archaeological surveys as Heritage Resources Technicians (HRT). The presentation was made by Gary Parker and Dan Cain, Zone Archaeologist, U.S. Forest Service. In the fall of 2011, the Caddo Nation's fire crew who are also trained as the Caddo Heritage Resources Technicians (HRTs) performed duties at the Kisatchie National Forest (Great Big Caney project) under a Participating Agreement between Region 8 of the U.S. Forest Service and the Caddo Nation. The Caddo Nation headquarters is in Binger, Oklahoma. The mission of the two 12-day work details was to conduct an intensive Phase I archaeological survey, with subsurface testing, of 1,440 acres on the Caney Ranger District in Webster Parish, LA. Mr. Daniel Cain, Zone Archaeologist responsible for the management of the Heritage Resource Programs on three of the five Ranger Districts (RDs) that comprise the Kisatchie National Forest, said, "Overall, it was my observation that the Caddo Nation HRT crew either met or exceeded all performance standards and expectations. They exhibited good field skills and a strong work ethic. Additionally, they were responsive to new ideas and direction, and acted well as a team. Their efforts and attention to mission expectations, despite arduous labor and adverse conditions were excellent. As a result of working with this well managed, very capable crew, the survey of 1,440 acres of the Caney RD was completed a full day ahead of schedule." A total of four new heritage sites were recorded, and with the extra work day, limited Phase II excavations were conducted at a recently identified Caddo habitation site on the Caney RD, which dates from c. 1,200 - 1,500 A.D. The results of those investigations will enhance understanding of Caddo life ways during that time period in north Louisiana, ensure the site's continued protection, and assist the Forest in its efforts to comply with Section 110 of the NHPA (National Historic Preservation Act). "I am very pleased to have worked with the Caddo Nation. I look forward to the opportunity to work with these gentlemen in the future, and will certainly recommend Caddo Nation HRTs to any colleagues in the Forest Service who may inquire." said Mr. Cain. The HRTs came

from the Caddo Nation's Fire Crew which is led by Fire Coordinator, Gary Parker. The crew's involvement started in 2009, when the Caddo Nation of Oklahoma signed a Regional Participating Agreement (PA) with the U.S Forest Service Southern Region (Region 8) under authority of the Cooperative Funds and Deposits Act of 1975. As highlighted in a Forest Service Tribal Relations 2009 Newsletter: "The Caddo Nation and the three Arkansas/Oklahoma Forests enjoy a long and productive relationship, and that relationship now extends regionally. The Caddo were one of the founding tribes of the To Bridge A Gap (TBAG) conference, have a multi-forest government-to-government Memorandum of Understanding, and were instrumental in the Columbian Shuttle Recovery efforts, and assisted in large-scale post-fire heritage surveys of the Bugaboo Fire in northeast Florida in 2007. The original PA authorized the Arkansas and Oklahoma Forests to employ trained tribal members in a variety of resource management work, such as wildfire suppression, prescribed burning, trail construction and maintenance, heritage surveys, and timber stand improvement. However, its authority was limited to three forests, and as the Caddo reputation for work ethic and professionalism spread, other Region 8 forests expressed interest in using their crews to help achieve resource goals."

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