



Dear Fellow Employees and Associates,

The month of November has been designated American Indian Heritage Month. As I enter my second year as Tennessee's Special Emphasis Program Manager, a couple of thoughts come to mind that I'd like to share with you.

First, I've learned that there are many more native people across Tennessee, as well as community-based organizations serving them, than I had realized. I would encourage D.C.'s and staff responsible for outreach to take advantage of these opportunities to reach more people through these groups. Many of these can be found on the internet. You may also want to check the census data for your area for guidance, location, and number of American Indians in your area.

Secondly, remember that each of us has a role to play in educating native people about our agency and recruiting students for possible careers with NRCS. The STAR program, Earth Team, and student intern programs can all be good tools for students to learn about us.

Finally, I was lucky enough to have the opportunity to attend the American Indian/Alaskan Native employee conference last year held in Cherokee, North Carolina. My commitment to conservation was recharged and I felt humbled to be in the company of such a spiritual group of people. I enjoyed discussing conservation work with members of tribes from all over the United States including Apache, Utes, Yakama, Nez Perce, Cherokee, Navaho, and Alaskan Native people. I have never been around a group of people with stronger conservation ethics. I would encourage anybody who gets the opportunity to participate in this organization.

Attached you will find information on native people in Tennessee that I hope you will find interesting.

**Sincerely,
Paul McQuade**

