



BIA Takes Leading Role in Oklahoma Wildfire Prevention Coalition

The Bureau of Indian Affairs has taken a leading role in the creation and early stages of the newly developed Oklahoma Wildfire Prevention Coalition. Pat McDowell, BIA Regional Fire Prevention Specialist, was recently elected co-chair of the group, along with a representative of the State of Oklahoma.

Representatives from the BIA Southern Plains and Eastern Oklahoma Regional Offices at the Oklahoma Fire Center have joined forces with a multitude of interagency partners to form the Coalition. Membership is open to those who support the concept that many of Oklahoma's wildfires are preventable. Coalition participants who have joined the BIA include: Oklahoma Department of Agriculture, Food and Forestry; Oklahoma Forestry Division; Oklahoma Department of Tourism and Recreation; Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation; US Fish and Wildlife Service; US Forest Service—Black Kettle National Grasslands and Ouachita National Forest; National Parks Service; Oklahoma Department of Emergency Management; the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA); the Choctaw Nation; and both the Farm Bureau and Farmer's Union insurance agencies.



Wildfire Prevention Coalition Members at Recent Meeting

This diverse group of Wildfire Prevention Coalition members was brought together by the current extreme fire and severe drought conditions throughout Oklahoma. Participants from the Oklahoma Fire Response had reviewed the materials created by a BIA Fire Prevention Team that was mobilized in February 2006, were impressed with the quality and content, and as a result it was decided to try a partnership approach to bolster prevention efforts throughout the state. The Oklahoma Wildfire Prevention Coalition is the first group of its kind in Oklahoma dedicated to the prevention of wildfire.



Wildfire Prevention Coalition Campaign

Contact: Pat McDowell, BIA Regional Prevention Specialist, 405-609-8872