



*Ronald LodgePole*

**Bio:**

Ronald LodgePole is an enrolled member of the Chippewa Cree tribe from the Rocky Boy Reservation in Montana. He received his B.S. in Land Resources Analysis and Management (Geospatial Environmental Analysis) and M.S. in Land Resource & Environmental Sciences from Montana State University in Bozeman, Montana. He is currently the Natural Resource Specialist (GIS Coordinator) for the Bureau of Indian Affairs - Western Region, Division of Forestry and Wildland Fire Management in Phoenix, Arizona.

**Plenary Title:**

*Differences and similarities of modern planning practices and Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK) in wildland fire management.*

**Abstract:**

Traditional landscape fosters diversity and sustainability, supports edible and medicinal plants, and creates an environment that encourages spiritual involvement. By blending traditional ecological knowledge with a scientific approach, BIA fuels managers are working alongside tribes to restore natural resources and culturally familiar landscapes. While more modern technology and tools have their place, indigenous ecological knowledge is aggressively being reintroduced by tribal elders and community members to help teach and better understand the historic relationship between fire, the environment, and people. Through traditional stories told and performed by tribal elders, fire is being returned to a respected place in land management. Ronald LodgePole will discuss how he applies indigenous ecological knowledge to help inform policy and plan management of fire in Indian country.



*Dr. Emerson Bull Chief*

**Bio:**

Dr. Emerson Bull Chief is an enrolled member of the Apsáalooke Nation and was born and raised in Montana. He earned an M.A. in Native American Studies and a Ph.D. in American Studies from Montana State University in Bozeman, Montana. His academic studies and research encompass biology, fish and wildlife management, Native American Studies with an emphasis in Indigenous knowledge systems, and American Studies with an emphasis in anthropology. He has 12 years of management experience as the project coordinator for the Native American Fish and Wildlife Societies' Chronic Wasting Disease Program, and as the Tribal Historic Preservation Officer for the Crow Nation. Dr. Bull Chief is the owner and manager of 7 Bison Cultural Consulting.

**Plenary Title:**

*Building Bridges: Approaches to Conducting Research with Tribal Communities*

**Abstract:**

Dr. Bull Chief will examine past research projects that were conducted on the Crow Reservation, including ways in which researchers approached community members, and which of their strategies were more successful than others. Finally, he will explore ways in which a researcher can best approach tribal communities, and what to take into consideration in choosing a location for the research.



*Jason Baldes*

**Bio:**

Jason Baldes is an enrolled member of the Eastern Shoshone Tribe from the Wind River Indian Reservation (WRIR) in Wyoming. He received his undergraduate and graduate degrees in Land Resource & Environmental Sciences from Montana State University in Bozeman, Montana. Interest in Indigenous cultural revitalization has afforded Baldes opportunities to work in New Zealand, Russia, and Denmark. Work in his own community has been focused on the reintroduction of Bison/Buffalo to the WRIR and is currently the Buffalo Representative for the Eastern Shoshone Tribe serves on the Advisory Board for the Tribal Lands Program of the National Wildlife Federation. He is currently the executive director of the Wind River Native Advocacy Center, a non-profit organization with a mission of empowering Native Americans in Wyoming to have a stronger voice through community organizing, education, research, legal advocacy and leadership development.

**Plenary Title:**

*Cultural & Ecological Restoration: Advocacy on the Wind River Indian Reservation, Wyoming*

**Abstract:**

The Wind River Reservation is home to the Eastern Shoshone and Northern Arapaho people. Sharing the only reservation in Wyoming, unique challenges and opportunities have presented themselves for these two tribes, which have different histories, and remain distinct sovereign governments. Jason Baldes will share how these two tribes have advocated for the restoration of ecological and cultural resources, such as the return of the buffalo to the reservation after 130 years. He will explain how Western scientific approaches can be used in conjunction with traditional ecological knowledge to improve land management policies and practices, conserve wildlife species and the purity of bison genetics, and

promote cultural revitalization. Finally, he will share examples of working in collaboration with the Tribal Partnerships Program of the National Wildlife Federation.