

GREENSBORO ECHO

National Forest Practitioners Gathering in Vancouver, Washington

The Pacific North West Forest Practitioners Forum, organized by the National Network of Forest Practitioner (NNFP) took place May 19-21, 2006 in Vancouver, Washington. This event – the third in a series of 6 regional forums – was a joint meeting between the Non-Timber Forest Products Working Group (NTFP WG) of NNFP and the Plant Conservation Alliance's (PCA) Medical Plant Working Group (MPWG) of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

The goals of the Forum were to 1) build knowledge about issues concerning the conservation, harvesting, cultivation and use of medicinal plants and other NTFPs, especially in the Pacific Northwest; 2) foster a better understanding of the value of traditional ecological knowledge and its role in public land management; 3) develop more partnership opportunities between Native American tribes and public land management agencies, based on current and past collaboration between these groups; 4) strengthen the capacity of practitioners, native tribes, and agencies to collaborate; and 5) improve access to information and technical assistance.

This was an exciting and innovative meeting. About 50 people attended from diverse areas; participants came from the Yakama Nation, Eastern Band of Cherokee, Appalachian Cherokee Nation, Karuk, Hoopa, Southern Band Tuscarora Indians, NTFPs practitioners and federal agencies including USDA Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management. Discussions included medicinal plants and other NTFPs, invasive species, forest management, commercialization of NTFPs, the use of traditional ecological knowledge and collaboration between federal agencies and Native American tribes.

Four NNFP Board members were also present at the meeting, Jude Wait, President, Amadou Diop, Treasurer, John Squires, Member at Large, and Frank Taylor. Mr. Diop and Mr. Taylor shared their experiences on developing cooperatives in the southeastern U.S., the challenges associated with



cooperatives and the issues facing minority landowners in rural America. In the southeast, NNFP will continue to work with our local partners on non-timber forest products such as ginseng harvesting and the utilization of biomass as an alternative energy source, which are becoming an increasingly important source of income for small farmers and owners of forestland.

Three fact sheets and a white paper will be produced as an outcome of the meeting. The fact sheet topics are: Invasive Species; NTFP Licensing and Fee Systems; Benefits to Native American Tribes and Rural Communities of Prioritizing NTFPs in U.S. Forest Service Management. The white paper will discuss examples of successful collaborations between Native American tribes and the U.S. Forest Service. All four items will be completed and available by August of this year and are free of charge. Please contact Ajit Krishnaswamy at NNFP at 888-252-1008 or ajit@nnfp.org if you would like a copy of the fact sheets or the white paper.

"Saving Rural America"

22nd ANNUAL JUNETEENTH CELEBRATION 2006



The League officers evaluated the 22nd Annual Juneteenth Day Festival and concluded it was an overwhelming success. The vendors all reported good sales or complete sell-out by the end of the day. A variety of foods included roasted corn, fried fish, hamburgers, bar-b-que ribs, sausages, hotdogs, assorted bakery, nachos, beverages, homemade ice cream, snocones and other snacks were available for purchase and enjoyment. Floral

arrangements, health oils/herbs and articles of clothing, shoes, aprons and knick knacks were also on sale.

The weather was sunny with cooling breezes, which contributed greatly to the attendance. Families and individuals continued to drop by throughout the day. It also appeared to be a larger than usual crowd of teenagers enjoying the festival as well. Although estimation of the crowd is difficult, a guestimate is that more than 500 attended throughout the day.

D.J. Harvey Hampton pleased the crowd with his variety of music and chatter. The popular Cake Walk was enjoyed by all ages as they competed for a chance to win a delicious cake for a donation of .50. Volunteers from Sta-Home were available to take blood pressures and offer healthy tips to anyone who stopped by their booth. Carolyn Hampton volunteered at the Winston County NAACP Branch booth with pamphlets, pens and banquet booklets. She also shared valuable information about the organization and its activities in the county, state and on the national level.

The Voters League had a multi-purpose booth which displayed the history of the formation of the

League by its founder, Reverend Ollie Daily. In addition, persons could register to vote and to practice on the new touch screen voting machine. Circuit Clerk Kim Ming provided instruction and passed out pamphlets on the new voting method.

Winners of the cash raffle were Rita Eichelberger, Jason Jones and Ray Ball.

More than 30 door prizes were donated by League member, Claudell Weaver, and awarded to the pleased crowd.

The League wishes to thank all the vendors for their continued support of the festival. Vendors continue to be a great part of its success and are encouraged to return yearly. Thank you to the youth who entertained; to the elected officials and candidates who were present; to the Buffalo Soldiers who came after their Relay for Life Rally and to all the families and friends who helped celebrate the Juneteenth Day Festival. There are many competing events and the League thanks everyone for supporting our only fund raising event.

A special thanks is extended to the Board of Supervisors for their work in improving Dean Park. The League and the Dean Park Commissioners will encourage the completion of this important on-going project. The League also encourages local residents and organizations to see the park as an asset and a great recreational resource. Everyone should put forth an effort to keep it a safe, clean and enjoyable facility for all ages.

Lastly, place the date on your calendar for 2007. The Juneteenth Day Festival is always the 1st Saturday in June. Keep this in mind when scheduling your event so we can all support each other.

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