

# Oklahoma Conservation Partnership Report



July 2012

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**VISION: Productive Lands Healthy Environment MISSION: Helping People Help the Land**

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## Artwork Selected for 2012 NRCS American Indian Heritage Poster

This year's winner of the American Indian Heritage Poster contest is Kathy Sturch, of Durant, Okla. Sturch is a member of the Choctaw Nation. This is the second time Sturch has won the NRCS poster contest. Sturch stated, "Art is my way of expressing my American Indian culture on canvas and it has been an honor to enter this contest". Every year, an American Indian residing in the selected American Indian Alaska Native Employee Association (AIANEA) region, is eligible to enter their artwork in a contest sponsored by the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). This year, the South Central Region [Arkansas, Louisiana, Oklahoma, and Texas] were selected. Oklahoma was charged with conducting the contest. The winning artwork is then produced into a poster used during American Indian Heritage Month, which is in November.



On June 6, the winning artwork was selected at the Oklahoma NRCS state office and according to State Conservationist, Ron Hilliard, "selecting the artwork is not an easy task." The title for this year was *"Our Past, Present, and Future"* with the theme being *"Tell me and I'll forget. Show me and I may not remember. Involve me and I'll understand."*

Selecting the artwork is just one of the many steps involved to develop the poster and distribute to all NRCS offices in the 50 states plus the Caribbean and Pacific Basin," stated District Conservationist and National AI/AN SEPM Dr. Carol Crouch. Poster planning committee members, STC Secretary Connie Fitzpatrick, Administrative Assistant Kim Brandt, Public Affairs Specialist, Tom Lucas and Crouch started the poster planning process in December 2011.

State Conservationist, Ron Hilliard; Oklahoma Civil Rights Advisory Committee members; Assistant State Conservationists (FO): Lanny Miller, Jamey Wood and Caleb Stone; Choctaw Nation Tribal Resource Conservationist Ann Colyer; Cassandra Sites, budget analyst; Sarah Hasenmyer, Management Analyst and new employee, Matthew Irby judged the artwork. The 2012 NRCS American Indian Heritage poster is scheduled to be delivered by October 1, 2012.



Judging artwork for 2012 American Indian Heritage poster is not an easy task for judges.



**Ecological Sciences Review - submitted by Steve Glasgow**

The Oklahoma Forest Regeneration Center, near Goldsby was the site of a tour organized by John Mustain, State Staff Forester on July 24, 2012. Several NRCS employees, including summer interns, from across the south central portion of the state participated in the informative tour which included the processes involved to harvest tree seed, treatment of seed for germination, planting of the seed, harvesting of the tree seedlings and packing the seedlings for shipment. The Oklahoma Forest Regeneration Center, operated through the Oklahoma Department of Agriculture, Food & Forestry provides most of the tree planting stock for conservation purposes statewide.



Scott Huff, Regeneration Center Manager, discusses various aspects of containerized tree seedlings

**Engineering Review - submitted by Chris Stoner**

**Upper Clear Boggy Creek Site 36 Final Inspection**

The final inspection for the rehabilitation of Upper Clear Boggy Creek Site 36 was completed on July 2, 2012. The site is located south of Ada in Pontotoc County, directly upstream of Upper Clear Boggy Creek Site 34, which is also being rehabilitated at this time. Representatives from the Oklahoma Conservation Commission, Pontotoc County Conservation District, Team's Excavating (Contractor), the NRCS State Office, Pauls Valley Watershed Office, and Ada Field Service Center were present. Some of the main features of the rehabilitation process consisted of installing a new principal spillway inlet tower and conduit, a riprap plunge basin, a vegetative wave berm, and a foundation drain. Upon final completion, Site 36 will be the second of 4 rehab projects to be completed in the Upper Clear Boggy Creek Watershed.



## Engineering Cont.....

### New Professional Engineer in Oklahoma!



On July 22, 2012 Monte Jones, Civil Engineer at the State Office, received his Professional Engineer certificate in a ceremony held at the Gaylord-Pickens Oklahoma Heritage Museum in Oklahoma City after successfully completing the eight hour examination for the Principles and Practice of Engineering Examination. This examination is the key part of becoming a Registered Professional Engineer (PE) for the state of Oklahoma. Congratulations to Monte for exercising this opportunity to demonstrate his professional engineering abilities by becoming a registered PE

Of the 24 engineers at Oklahoma NRCS, 14 are P.E.'s and 7 are E.I.T.'s (Engineer in Training).

### NRCS- My Intern Experience – Meredith Shiflet, Engineering Trainee



Before beginning my tour with the Natural Resources Conservation Service in 2011, I was struggling to find the right job to fit what I was passionate about. I wanted something that was unique, challenging, and would allow me to spend time in the field, using my skill set to help others. Fortunately, I found a job that combined it all.

To me, NRCS is environmental stewardship in motion every day. The NRCS has been “Helping People Help the Land” through planning and assistance for over 75 years. My first summer (2011) taught me so much about the agency’s past, present and future. While working in the Perry Field Office, I got to see first hand the work NRCS does with local producers. I had the added benefit of being located with a Technical Service Office with engineers to learn from as well. I was able to work with my supervisor, the District Conservationist, to better understand NRCS programs and conservation planning. I spent many days traveling with the engineering technician designing, planning and in-

specting erosion control practices. This gave me the opportunity to be out in the field, honing my survey and design skills. The engineering staff in the Technical Service Office did a wonderful job taking me under their wing. They taught me how to utilize tools such as GPS survey equipment, GIS software, CAD software, and modeling programs in conjunction with the “book knowledge” from the classroom to complete the design process.

The design skills I learned my first summer proved to be invaluable when I was fortunate enough to return again in 2012. Stationed in the Pauls Valley Project Office, my experience was entirely different than the last. The Project office focuses on rehabilitation and construction of large structures, predominantly earthen dam and stream stabilization projects. The jobs were bigger, more challenging and unique than I had ever seen. My primary goals were to be comfortable interpreting construction drawings and specifications while learning project management skills. At one point the office was juggling five major rehabilitation projects. Traveling with the project engineers, I visited the construction inspectors at each site to help resolve questions and observe progress. Things I had only touched on in school came to life while I was in the field.

At the end of each term all of the trainees gather to present their experiences to the State Leadership Team. When preparing my presentation this year, I began to look back on all of my experiences and one stood out in particular. On a day trip during my first summer, I traveled to Gracemont, OK. I had never been to Sugar Creek, but I knew the engineering challenges we were facing in the area. The design had just been given the green light and the contractor was ready to break ground. I remember the drawings looked so foreign to me. I struggled to wrap my head around the big picture and see how the site would look after the work was done. This summer I went back to Sugar Creek. I visited the site many times as construction neared completion. Seeing the final inspection on that site reminded me how much I had traveled, seen, and learned in such a short period of time. Each person I have met within NRCS along the way has helped me to grow and learn not only as an engineer but as a person. I look forward to the changes and challenges of the future as I continue “Helping People Help the Land.”

**Water Resources Review - submitted by Bill Porter**

**Status of Oklahoma Watershed Rehabilitation Projects as of 7-19-12**

In Planning					
Sallisaw Creek	29	Sequoyah	Sequoyah County CD	Estimated completion 10-1-12	
Rock Creek	15 & 16	Murray	Murray County CD	Estimated completion 10-1-12	
Planning Completed - Awaiting Design					
Sallisaw Creek	32	Sequoyah	Sequoyah County CD	Pending Landrights	
In Design					
Quapaw Creek	15M	Lincoln	Lincoln County CD	Pending	
Bartiz Creek	11	Dewey	Dewey County CD	Estimated completion 8-15-13	
Barnitz Creek	5	Dewey	Dewey County CD	Estimated completion 9-15-13	
Sallisaw Creek	30	Sequoyah	Sequoyah County CD	Estimated completion 8-1-12	
Fourche Maline	7M	Latimer	Latimer County CD	Estimated completion 9-15-14	
Cottonwood Creek	16	Canadian	East Canadian CD	Estimated completion 10-15-13	
Cobb Creek	3	Washita	Deer Creek CD		
Upper Black Bear	62	Noble	Noble County CD		
Planning & Design Completed - Awaiting Construction					
Cottonwood Creek	54	Logan	Logan County CD	Pending Landrights	
Sallisaw Creek	34	Sequoyah	Sequoyah County CD	Pending Landrights	
Sallisaw Creek	33	Sequoyah	Sequoyah County CD	Pending	
Ft Cobb Laterals	10	Caddo	South Caddo County CD	Estimated start 12-1-12	
Bartiz Creek	1	Dewey	Dewey County CD	Estimated start 4-1-13	
Sallisaw Creek	28	Sequoyah	Sequoyah County CD		
Under Construction					
Turkey Creek	9	Washita	Washita County CD	Estimated completion 8-15-12	
Sugar Creek	L-44	Caddo	South Caddo County CD	Estimated completion 9-1-12	*ARRA
Cottonwood Creek	15	Kingfisher	Kingfisher County CD	Estimated completion 8-1-12	*ARRA
Caney-Coon Creek	2M	Coal	Coal County CD	Estimated completion 2-1-13	
Upper Clear Boggy	33	Pontotoc	Pontotoc County CD	Estimated completion 12-15-12	*ARRA
Sallisaw Creek	26	Adair	Adair County CD	Estimated completion 4-15-13	
Upper Clear Boggy	34	Pontotoc	Pontotoc County CD	Estimated completion 6-15-13	*ARRA

**Water Resources Cont....**

		Rehabilitation Completed	
Sandstone Creek	16A	Roger Mills	Upper Washita CD
Barnitz Creek	14	Dewey	Dewey County CD Johnston County CD
Mill Creek	18	Johnston	CD
Double Creek	1,2,3,4,5,6	Washington	Caney Valley CD
Cavalry Creek	6	Washita	Washita County CD
Sandstone Creek	12,17A	Roger Mills	Upper Washita CD
Sergeant Major Creek	1,2	Roger Mills	Upper Washita CD
Cobb Creek	2	Washita	Deer Creek CD
Sallisaw Creek	15,16,20	Adair	Adair County CD Seminole County CD
Big Wewoka Creek	29	Seminole	CD
Cottonwood Creek	17	Canadian	East Canadian CD
Sallisaw Creek	18M	Adair	Adair County CD West Caddo County CD
Sugar Creek	L-43	Caddo	Pontotoc County CD
Upper Clear Boggy	35	Pontotoc	CD
Cobb Creek	1	Washita	Deer Creek CD Pontotoc County CD
Upper Clear Boggy	36	Pontotoc	CD

\*American Recovery Reinvestment Act

**Oklahoma Civil Rights Committee Review - submitted by Jennifer Mosteller**

On June 6<sup>th</sup>, the Oklahoma Civil Rights Action Committee hosted a welcome picnic at Boomer Lake Pavilion, for the 2012 Summer Interns. Sixteen interns, from across the nation, worked across Oklahoma, in Field and Tech Offices, as well as the State Office. Good food and good company was shared by all, before the much needed rain brought the gathering to a premature close.

The 2012 Summer Interns were as follows: Pamela Brittain, SC intern at Wagoner; Robert “Chism” Horton, Range Mgmt. intern at Mangum; Tommy Ketchum, SC intern at Nowata; Meredith Shiflet, Ag Engineer intern in the Pauls Valley Watershed Office; Brandon Taylor, SC intern at Walters; Merica-Whees Xiong, SC intern at Chickasha; Robert Daniel, Visual Information intern at the State Office; William Greuel, SC intern at Muskogee; Amanda Hannon, SC intern at Hugo; Liana Wagner, Ag Economist intern at Stigler; Reed Yule, SC intern at Guymon; Ryan McCloud, Ag Economist intern at Stillwater; Tegan Neighbors, SC intern at Hobart; Mark “Bradley” Battershell, SC intern at Holdenville; Keenan Arnold, Civil Engineer intern at Perry; and Miranda Frazier-Galadima, SC intern at Guthrie.



Raul Hinojosa, Tom James, and Matt Ward cook up an awesome batch of burgers and dogs

2012 NRCS Summer Interns



## Zone 1 Review - submitted by Lanny Miller

### BEAVER & TEXAS COUNTY

The Oklahoma Panhandle Agriculture and Irrigation Association and the Panhandle Regional Economic Development Coalition, Inc hosted a workshop at Oklahoma Panhandle State University on July 17 to gather input for the Panhandle Regional Water Plan. NRCS and Conservation District's were invited to discuss local efforts to address water quantity and quality concerns. Carri Manley, DC at Beaver FO, and Alan Messenger, DC at Guymon FO, discussed NRCS technical assistance and conservation programs available to land owners/operators in the Oklahoma Panhandle.

### BLAINE COUNTY - Watonga Field Service Center

The Central North Canadian River Conservation District co-sponsored a land judging workshop on June 19. Six schools came with about 35 4-H and FFA students. Troy Collier, NRCS Resource Soil Scientist, started off with a workshop inside that moved to the field where he demonstrated 4 different holes. Lunch was provided by Central North Canadian River Conservation District. At the afternoon session, the students were given the opportunity to judge 4 holes in a competition setting. The scores were then discussed so students could see where they made mistakes and what they did correct. Sponsors included the CNCRCDC, Geary FFA, Farm Credit, North Canadian River Watershed Project, Watonga NRCS, and Alvin Woodruff.



### CIMARRON COUNTY – Boise City Field Service Center

The NRCS and District cooperative team began 23 years ago with Brown and Imler. Jim Belford came on board 11 years ago as a District Equipment Manager. About 5 years ago, Jim took the position as a coop employee assisting NRCS as a soil conservationist. At present, he is acting as one of the CST/CDSI Team Contacts.

During July, Iris Imler, Programs Coordinator and Jim Belford, Coop Employee assisted Cherrie Brown, District Conservationist in writing 181 CRP contracts, obtaining signatures and dissemination of the signed contracts to FSA. They also assist Brown with writing of managed and emergency grazing plans. Brown says “I know I can always count on my district partners for almost anything I need and can count on their conservation and programmatic expertise to carry on our role when I am on leave.”



Iris Imler, Programs Coordinator

## Zone 1 Cont.....

### LOGAN COUNTY – Guthrie Field Service Center

A pond management workshop was held on June 5, 2012 in Langston, Oklahoma approximately three-fourths of a mile south of the intersection of Old Highway 33 and Choctaw Rd. The event began at 9am and was open to the public. The pond management workshop was sponsored by the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Guthrie field office, Logan County Conservation District, and The Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation. Attendee's of the workshop were informed on how to manage constructed pond dams in order to maintain integrity. Some of the other topics discussed were how to treat dispersive soils in a pond, determining stocking rates of fish, and identifying aquatic vegetation. Two different ponds were observed, and questions were answered accordingly. Refreshments were served, and additional reading materials were made available for attendee's who desired more information. Attendee's traveled from all parts of Oklahoma to attend the event. The workshop went very well with a turn-out of approximately 70 people.



### MAJOR COUNTY – Fairview Field Service Center

The Major County Conservation District, Major County NRCS and Major County OSU Extension welcomed 8 participants to their Nutrient Management LEA planning meeting on July 11, 2012 at the Fairview Service Center. Participants included current EQIP participants as well as those that have shown interest in the Nitrogen Rich Strips for crop nitrogen management mainly in winter wheat production. Producers were able to discuss their concerns as well as their experiences using the N-Rich strip technology leading to a productive conversation between the producers that have been using this tool and the ones that are planning on using this tool starting this fall. Michael Roberts, NRCS and Jim Rhodes, OSU fielded questions and discussed requirements to meet NRCS's standards and specifications. Cindy Bierig, MCCD assisted with the meeting as well and we were able to walk the participants through OSU's website showing the computer printout data that would be used in implementing this practice. This tool provides numerous nitrogen management benefits, allowing producers in some cases to not over apply nitrogen in the fall or when top dressing providing environmental benefits as well as allowing the producer to optimize yields meeting plant health needs when the conditions are conducive.



Producers discussing the use of the N Rich Strip management tool in their cropping systems

Producers watching a demonstration on OSU's online Sensor-Based Nitrogen Rate Calculator program



## Zone 2 Review - submitted by Chad Kacir

### Pensacola Dam

On July 24, 2012, employees of Zone 2 were given the opportunity to visit the Pensacola Dam with the Grand River Dam Authority followed by a tour at the Coblenz Dairy. The GRDA personnel were very knowledgeable and helpful during the tour. Employees asked many good questions and learned tons of information about the dam's creation and history. During the Dairy tour, employees were shown how the entire operation worked. We were able to view the stalls where the cows were milked, the free range barn, waste storage lagoon, feed mixing area, and also where the calves were raised for the first few weeks of life. Mr. and Mrs. Coblenz, and their sons were very hospitable and even provided refresh-

ments to include homemade cookie and ice cold milk...we were, after all, at a Dairy Farm.



### Annual Safety/Awards Meeting

On June 7, 2012, all Zone 2 employees came together to attend and participate in the Annual Safety/Awards Meeting. During the meeting Steve Loveland, Game Warden for Mayes County, donated his time to give a briefing on the safety issues faced by people when outdoors. Employees in the zone also participated in a team building challenge and several other activities to help build camaraderie and awareness of safety. Also in attendance were employees of the various County Conservation Districts throughout Zone 2 as well as some family members. Everyone enjoyed themselves and learned a lot of valuable information to use while in the field.



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Guest speaker Steve Loveland, Game Warden, Mayes County, talks about safety issues that could affect our employees when outdoors

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**Zone 2 Cont.....**

**CREEK COUNTY - Bristow Field Service Center**

The 69th Annual Creek County Ag Tour was held May 17th this year. The tour is hosted every year by the Creek County Conservation District. This year the participants toured The Rocking TA Quarter Horse Ranch, Tidal School Winery, The Flying C-Bar Ranch and The Living Kitchen Vegetable Farm. Nicholas Jones the local District Conservationist explained NRCS Farm Bill programs and CCCD programs. Farm Credit of Eastern Oklahoma gave a presentation and provided hamburgers for lunch. The group got a chance to see the New Burn Trailer that the recently formed Creek County Burn Association has, donated to them by OSU. The crowd also viewed a High Tunnel Hoop House at The Living Kitchen Farm. This tour was an excellent tour, by far the most entertaining in many years.




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69th Annual Creek County  
Ag Tour

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**CRAIG COUNTY - Vinita Field Service Center**

On Wednesday June 6<sup>th</sup> at 9:00am the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and the Craig County Conservation District (CCCD) held an informational meeting at the USDA Service Center, 235 West Hope Road in Vinita. It provided conservation program information to assist Craig County land managers with installation and maintenance of conservation practices. Erik Friend, local district conservationist from the NRCS provided the details of the conservation programs from the USDA Farm Bill. There were three county residents in attendance. All participants submitted applications for EQIP.



**ROGERS COUNTY - Claremore Field Service Center**

Employees and interns from zone 2 assisted with the annual Billy B Concert in Claremore on May 8, 2012. During the activities, staff helped students learn the importance of water quality and quantity by having students participate in the “Long Haul” activity. Students participating had the opportunity to learn how their ancestors had to get their water, how many gallons per day the average household uses, ways to conserve water and to be aware of how littering can affect the quality of the water around them. The “Long Haul” was only one of many activities the children participated in. The children attending the concert had a great time and learned many things about how to help our natural environment stay beautiful and healthy.




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Pamela Britain  
(center), student  
intern for Wagoner  
County, waits to  
start the race

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### **Zone 3 Review - submitted by Kenny Hitch**

#### **BECKHAM COUNTY - Sayre Field Service Center**

The North Fork of Red River Conservation District hosted a Resource Day for the fifth grade students in the district. Three hundred and five students attended the one day affair. Ten instructional stations were manned by representatives from NRCS, OSU Extension, Washita Battlefield National, Oklahoma Archaeological Survey, Oklahoma Ag in the Classroom, Upper Washita Conservation District and many volunteers. The Board of Directors served the students and teachers hotdogs at noon. The weather was wonderful. The Outdoor Classroom is a wonderful facility to introduce the students to the subjects of wildlife, conservation, recycling, Indian culture and watersheds.

The District was also host to the Elk City Third Graders for their end of year field trip. The two hundred and fifty students, teachers and parents had a fun day at seven different stations that challenged them in contests. The group had a sack lunch and water balloon fight.



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North Fork of Red River  
Resource Day

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#### **GRADY COUNTY - Chickasha Field Service Center**

##### **Third Year Intern Brings Experience to Chickasha Field Office**

Merica-Wheesuk Xiong was born and raised in Green Bay, Wisconsin and moved with her family to Cassville, Missouri at age 17. She graduated High School in Cassville while helping her parents operate a large poultry farm. Merica accepted the honor of becoming an 1890 Scholar at Langston University in Langston, Oklahoma, and will graduate in December of 2012; having attended the University for 3.5 years with a degree in Natural Resources Management with a minor in Crop & Soil Science. Merica has been employed with the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) during the summer months of her collegiate years and has worked in Jay, Poteau, and presently in Chickasha, Oklahoma.



## Zone 3 Cont....

### MCCLAIN COUNTY - Purcell Field Service Center

#### New Employee in Zone 3 Already *Helping People Help the Land*

Matt Irby joined zone 3 on June 4, as the soil conservation technician, for the Purcell and Norman field offices. Matt was born and raised in Oklahoma and graduated from Oklahoma State University with a degree in Environmental Science in May of 2010. He and his wife Jeri' will be making their home in Goldsby, Oklahoma, in August. Jeri' will begin working on her master's degree and her new research assistance job at the University of Oklahoma in August. They both enjoy trail riding, hiking, any outdoor activities and their dogs. Matt is already *helping people help the land*; he just completed his first pond design, staked the pond and is working effectively with the landowner and contractor to get the pond implemented. He is excited about starting his career with NRCS and will be a valuable asset to the agency.




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Matt Irby, Soil  
Conservation  
Technician

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## Zone 4 Review - submitted by Jamey Wood

### Prescribed Burn Training

Ten employees from NRCS offices in McAlester, Poteau, Sallisaw, Stigler, Wilburton and the State Office in Stillwater, as well as one employee from the Haskell County Conservation District and one from the Oklahoma Forestry Services participated in a **prescribed burn training** held in Haskell County on July 3rd. The training was provided by John Mustain and Brandon Reavis, NRCS State Office employees and was the first NRCS conducted training and implementation of a "summer burn" in Oklahoma. Historically, NRCS prescribed burns have been conducted in the early spring, while the vegetation is dormant. Recent research from OSU has indicated that "summer burns" can also be beneficial to the landscape. The purpose of this particular burn was to control the invasion of undesirable woody seedlings on a 58 acre area that is a part of a Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP) restoration site. According to Mustain the burn was a "text book" burn and appeared to have been extremely successful. The landowner was very pleased with the outcome of the burn and much knowledge was gained by all those who attended. The burn was very timely in that a burn ban was declared in Haskell County on July 9<sup>th</sup>.




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A "summer burn" slowly backfires through a fescue/bermuda field in an effort to control undesirable woody seedlings, primarily elm sprouts

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Steve Barner, WRP Specialist, and Brandon Reavis establishing a black line firebreak

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**Zone 4 Cont.....**

**BRYAN COUNTY - Durant Field Service Center**

**NRCS Participates in Choctaw Nation Youth Summit**

The Choctaw Nation hosted their 5<sup>th</sup> Annual American Indian Career Summit in Durant, Oklahoma. The Choctaw Nation Event Center was the site for the Summit. The theme for the Summit was “Extreme Ability Is Power.” The event drew over 1400 American Indian youth and young adults from 39 Tribes across the state of Oklahoma. This event has continued to grow as American Indian youth and young adults, from all over the state of Oklahoma, flock to this annual youth event that began in 2007.

NRCS received a special invitation to have a career and educational booth at the Summit. Dr. Carol Crouch, NRCS National American Indian and Alaskan Native Special Emphasis Program Manager and District Conservationist for NRCS Oklahoma, Ann Colyer, Tribal Resource Conservationist to the Choctaw Nation and Valerie Hannon, District Conservationist for Bryan County, represented NRCS at the event. The American Indian Youth Summit is designed to motivate and inspire youth and young adults ages 14 to 21 about their future. The American Indian youth were provided the opportunity to visit with exhibitors at their booths. NRCS had a career booth at the event and provided the NRCS career brochure and educational materials. Attendees received the NRCS American Indian Heritage poster for 2011 and the *Native Bee* poster; as well as an opportunity to visit with NRCS employees.

“I think it’s really important in today’s society that American Indian youth have the opportunity to attend events like this that provides them the opportunity to hear speakers talk about hardships and barriers they may encounter as they approach college and make career choices; but, also have the opportunity to hear from individuals that have overcome hardships and become successful” stated Dr. Crouch. Crouch continued; “it is so important the NRCS attends these types of events where the age group is 14 to 21; reaching our youth at an early age allows us to “plant a seed” about the career opportunities and internships that NRCS has to offer”.



Choctaw Nation Princess receives a copy of the NRCS American Indian Heritage poster from NRCS District Conservationist, Valerie Hannon. NRCS handed out posters to over 500 American Indian youth during the Summit



Choctaw Nation Princesses open the Summit with *The Lords Prayer*; performed in sign language and honoring their culture.



Over 1400 American Indian youth and young adults attend the 2012 Choctaw Nation Youth Summit