

Fire prevention is everyone's job

by Marsha Shewczyk

Hot, dry weather indicates summer fun and outdoor activity to most people but a firefighter has a different perspective on those conditions. At any moment he may hear his pager go off and have to spend anywhere from an hour to a week battling a fire.

What starts out as a small one-acre fire can, because of wind and fuel conditions, end up being a 7700 acre blaze which recently occurred on the Warm Springs reservation. Then it becomes a fight against a destructive force and a hope that conditions do not get worse. At times it's an uneven battle.

Fortunately the number of fires in and around Warm Springs is a low level this year. People, too often the cause of fires, are becoming more aware that their own caution can prevent fires.

Fire prevention is becoming as important as fire suppression. For a year, now, it has been a full time job for prevention technician Ed Johns. It is his duty to make adults and children conscious of the destructive nature of fire and to encourage their cooperation in preventing fires.

The Central Oregon Co-op, of which Fire Management is a part, was noted for its efforts at public education and awareness, for its media coverage aimed at fire prevention and for assisting with public compliance to fire regulations.

As the result of fire prevention work by the Central Oregon Co-op Warm Springs Fire Management is able to share recognition for their fire prevention achievements. The group was awarded the National Bronze Smokey the



Fire prevention technician Ed Johns alerts community members and travelers to the dangers of fire. Hopefully these fire warning boards erected around the community will be observed by everyone.

Spilyay Tymoo photo by Shewczyk

Bear award.

On the Warm Springs reservation Smokey the Bear often visits the schools cautioning children about playing with matches and simply making them aware of the dangers of fire.

Signs are posted at various places throughout the community indicating to

community residents and tourists the fire conditions of the day.

Warm Springs Forest Products Industries has allowed a sign to be posted warning logging personnel of the conditions. "The mill has been doing an outstanding job at fire prevention," comments Johns.

By means of a computerized analysis, weather, burnable fuels and humidity ratings are provided. An A rating designates no fire prevention necessary other than common sense. However an E rating is posted if danger exists due to the day's conditions. Everything in the woods will be closed down after 1:00 p.m. to

prevent fire. An F rating means everything will be closed down for the day.

Other fire prevention activities undertaken by the Fire Management department include working with the tribal Fire & Safety department to burn areas under controlled conditions which could present fire danger. Trimming low branches from trees and cleaning up around houses cleaning up around houses is part of this method of prevention. Residents of Warm Springs are encouraged to keep areas immediately surrounding their homes fresh and green. Fresh paint on houses, too, can prevent fires as chipping paint provides fuel for fire.

Burning permits are issued by the Fire and Safety department, another means of controlling and preventing fires.

An average of 60 fires a year occur in Warm Springs and surrounding area on the reservation. This year, 21 of the fires have been caused by humans. In the past there have been as many as 108 fires in a year and a few as 7. Too often humans are responsible.

With rising populations and increased numbers of tourists during the fire season, prevention is essential. Observing rules concerning fire and using common sense are important.

Occasionally, reminders are necessary that fire is dangerous and can be prevented. Firefighters will be the first to agree with that. But fire prevention is not solely the job of firefighters, it should be everyone's job. Community involvement is essential in fire prevention. Smokey says, "It's up to you."

Prescribed fire is beneficial

Forest managers are in the business of both fire prevention and fire use. Under planned and controlled conditions fire can benefit forests and ranges.

Smokey the Bear is actively continuing the campaign the continuing the campaign against carelessly the maliciously caused forest fire with forest managers. But Smokey's role and the ways in which his fire prevention message relates to forest fires is being confused. Fire can be both the friend and the foe of the forest.

There are basically two kinds of forest fires. They may be started by man or lightning. Fire by prescription which benefits the forest is planned and often intentionally set by man; and wildfire, which does not benefit the forest is unplanned and often started by man's carelessness, or malice, or accident.

Land resource managers have been intentionally using fire in the forest for many years. It can be a powerful resource management tool. Carefully controlled prescribed fire is used to improve grazing conditions for some species of wild animals and birds, to prepare seed beds for new trees, and to reduce fire hazards.

More recently, fire has been used to maintain natural ecological systems in wilderness areas. In such cases fire, once started, is allowed to burn under close surveillance where previously prescribed conditions of humidity, temperature, topography, fuels, etc., are met.

The "prescribed" fire programs described here are different. They have different objectives, and their management varies. But they have one thing in common: The fact that they are fires burning under conditions that have previously been determined to be beneficial and that meet land management objectives.

These "prescribed" fires are not the concern of Smokey's fire prevention campaign. His job is still the big one of reducing the number of carelessly and maliciously caused wildfires. His mass-media campaign is America's most effective antidote. His message, "Only You Can Prevent Forest Fires" is the keystone of forest production against fires which annually destroy millions of dollars worth of property, valuable natural resources, and even human life.

Ken Smith to receive achievement award

Los Angeles, September 15, 1982—The United Indian Development Association Board of Directors recently announced three distinguished honorees for annual awards to be presented at the INPRO/82 Banquet, Thursday evening, October 14, 1982.

The awards ceremony will be held at the Sheraton Universal Hotel in North Hollywood, California, and will commence upon surprise presentations of Outstanding Business Owners of the Year from San Diego, Los Angeles and northern California. Competition for these awards is based upon profitability, management expertise and contributions back into the Indian community.

Each year, recognition is given to those persons who contributed most to American Indian economic progress. On the public sector side, an award will be presented to Ken Smith, Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs of the U.S. Department of Interior, for his newly instituted policy on Economic Development Initiatives. On the private sector side, outstanding recognition will be given for contributions made by Robert McIntyre and the Southern California Gas Company, which is a founding member of the UIDA Council.

A highlight of the event will be formal bestowing of the Jay Silverheels Achievement Award (JSA) to the Honorable A. David Lester, Commissioner of the Administration for Native American, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. The JSA award is bestowed each year upon an outstanding American Indian who has achieved personal success while contributing to the improvement of American Indian communities.

Mr. A. David Lester, a member of the Creek Nation, was born in Claremore, Oklahoma, and is a graduate of Brigham Young University. In 1969, Mr. Lester served as an Economic Development Specialist for the National Congress of American Indians. In 1970, he became the first President of United Indian Development Association (UIDA) which was pioneering new approaches for increasing the number of Indian tribes and individuals involved in business ownership. Mr. Lester's efforts in Indian economic development led to two Presidential appointments as an advisor on Indian Federal policy. In 1970, he was appointed to the National Advisory Council on Minority Enterprise, and in 1972 he was

named to the National Council on Indian Opportunity.

In 1978, Mr. Lester was appointed Commissioner of the Administration for Native Americans (ANA) which nationally promotes economic and social self-sufficient for American Indians. ANA's focus is on supporting the efforts of tribal governments to strengthen or establish the economic, governmental, social and legal institutions. Mr. Lester's dedication to assisting American Indians achieve self-sufficiency has been exceptional and inspirational. He truly is deserving of the Jay Silverheels Award for INPRO/82.

INPRO is the nation's only annual conference dedicated to American Indian progress in economic and business development and is sponsored by the United Indian Development Association (UIDA). UIDA is a private non-profit corporation, founded and directed by American Indians. Through UIDA's business and economic development efforts, the number of Indian enterprises in California has increased from 50 to 600 since its inception twelve years ago. These clients include individual business owners, tribal enterprises and community service centers.