

Udall Scholars Bring A World Of Curiosity And Enthusiasm To Grand Ronde

UDALL continued
from front page

(that got loose and flapped around for a day), left the thirteen participants unable "to see the forest for the leaves," according to Martina Gast, a Red Rock Ojibwe, First Nation Band, located in Nipigon, Ontario, who is Tribal co-coordinator for the trip.

Gast, the only Native on the crew, nevertheless helped coordinate visits to a number of Indian experiences along the way.

In Louisiana, they visited the United Houma Nation and traveled the bayous; in Kansas, they learned about the Indian boarding school system at the Haskell Indian School; and in Oklahoma City, they attended a Tribal health symposium.

"A huge learning experience," said Gast.

The bus was fit and forward thinking, with leather seats still smelling new and a biodiesel engine fueled by a blend of 20 percent biodiesel and 80 percent ultra low sulfur diesel, along with carbon offsets purchased through Native Energy to make the tour carbon-neutral.



Udall Communications
Manager Eli Zigas

The scholars from across the country anticipated futures in fish and wildlife, geography and history and one a few years out of college was considering a Masters degree in business.

"I think they need people like us in business," said Jennifer Baldwin, the group's blogger and videographer, who also was considering further education in Indian law.

Here in Grand Ronde, they picked up rhineharts, polaskis, sandviks and mcclouds, and followed the Natural Resources interns' bus down Grand Ronde Road and out past Sharkey's Bridge to the Tillamook Trail, still in development.

"The understory (in the woods) is unbelievable," said Natural



Udall scholars work with the Natural Resources summer youth crew on another section of the Tillamook Trail.

Resources Fish and Wildlife Coordinator Kelly Dirksen. "Your work will give the opportunity for others to see a part of the trail that only loggers normally see."

Somewhere about a mile down the trail, the roots again poked out and the bottomless hills encroached a little too close to the trail for comfort. Interns and scholars picked up their implements of construction and under the direction of Youth Crew Leader Alyssa Cudmore, they

continued the arduous process of stretching out and widening the path.

Working together, they brought a huge, fifteen foot length of tree down from the hill to make a border for the trail.

And here on this path, you could hear the beginnings of conversation between the groups. By the time of the lunch bbq held behind the Natural Resources building, they were discussing the relative merits of Tillamook cheese vs Cabot cheese

of Vermont, and Wisconsin cheese, that may or may not have an unearned reputation for quality.

In his 30 years in Congress and 14 as Chair of the House Interior Committee, Udall championed many Native and environmental causes.

The Udall Foundation, congressionally established in 1992, offers scholarships, fellowships and internships. www.udall.gov ■

Photos By Toby McClary



Covered in leaves and legacy is the Udall bus. Thirteen Udall scholarship alumni traveled for two months across the country honoring ten years of community service in the name of Arizona Congressman, Morris Udall.