

Welcome to the Blackfoot Confederacy



Agriculture Summit
September 18, 2017

Agriculture Resource Management Plan (ARMP)



Loren BirdRattler
Project Manager



BLACKFEET NATION

Meet our Blackfeet ARMP Team



- Dawn Falcon – Water Resource Policy Planner
- Teri Dahle – Land, Conservation, and Holistic Management Planner
- Will Seeley, Big Sky Watershed Corps Member

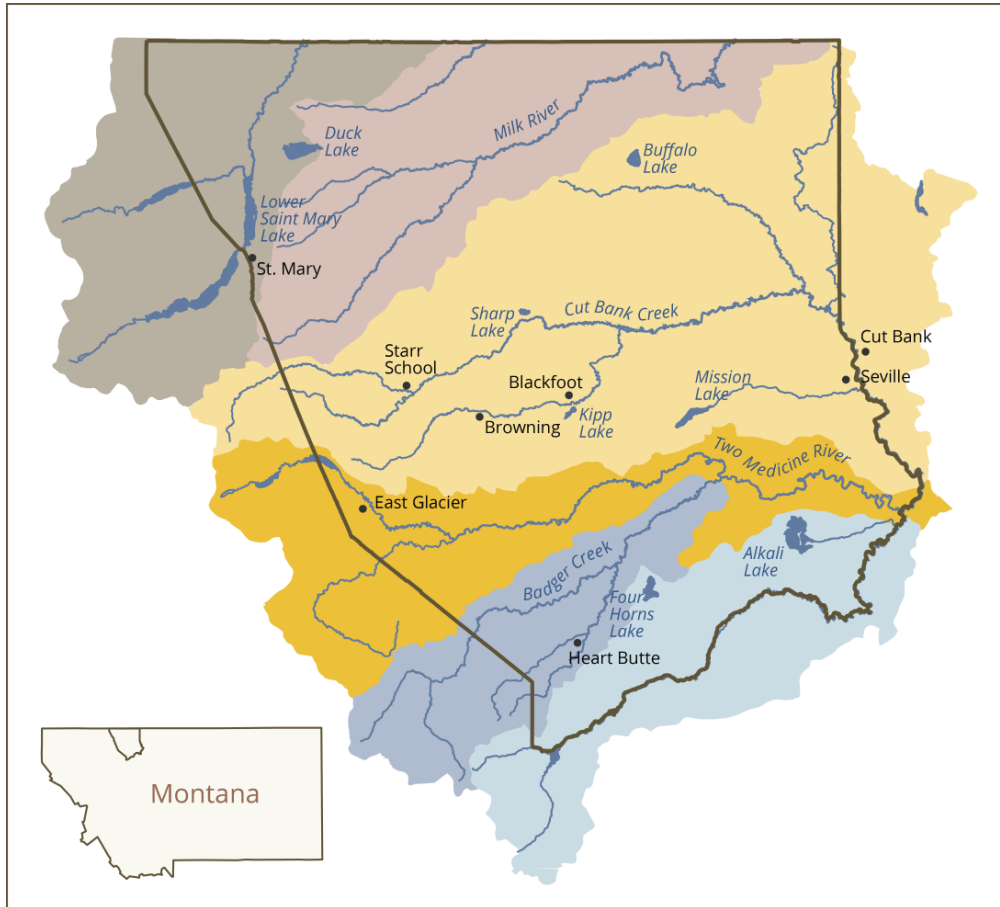
Where are we located?



- The present reservation is located in northwest Montana, bordered by Glacier National Park to the west and Alberta, Canada to the north and the Bob Marshall Wilderness to the southwest. Spanning 1.5 million acres, (just over 640,000 hectares).
- Larger than the state of Delaware and nearly twice the size of Rhode Island (without the two Senators and one or two Congressman) that represent both of those states
- The land elevation varies from 3,400 feet at the east end to over 9,000 feet at Chief Mountain in the west.
- The Blackfeet Tribe acquired 324,404 acres of fractionated interests from the Land Buy Back Program (Third installment of the Cobell Settlement) in 2017 and is scheduled for another round in 2018.



Blackfeet Natural Resources



- The Blackfeet reservation has abundant natural resources, including forestlands, oil and gas reserves, and is home to many species of fish and wildlife. In fact, there are more animal and plant species on the Blackfeet Reservation than anywhere else in the lower forty eight states. Fifty five percent of Montana's (94.1 million acres or 38,080,918 hectares) plant and animal species exist on the Blackfeet Reservation (1.5 million acres or just over 640,000 hectares).
- More than 518 miles (833 Kilometers) of streams and 180 bodies of water, including eight large lakes, that derive from five watersheds at the head waters of three water systems (Columbia, Missouri, Saskatchewan) the can also be found on the reservation.
- On April 4, 2017, the Blackfeet People passed the Blackfeet Water Compact which defined the Blackfeet allocation for water from our five watersheds. The Blackfeet were given 800,000 acre feet per year including rights to all surface water including all rights to the three middle watersheds.

Authority: Public Law 103-77 (The American Indian Agriculture Resource Management Act of 1993)



- **Indian agricultural resource management planning program**
- (C) Whether developed directly by the tribe or by the Secretary, the plan shall-
- determine available agriculture resources;
- identify specific tribal agricultural resource goals and objectives;
- establish management objectives for the resources;
- **define critical values of the Indian tribe and its members and provide identified holistic management objectives;**
- identify actions to be taken to reach established objectives;
- be developed through public meetings;
- use the public meeting records, existing survey documents, reports, and other research from Federal agencies, tribal community colleges, and land grant universities; and
- be completed within three years of the initiation of activity to establish the plan.

What is the role of a Tribal Government in agriculture production?



- **Sustainable Economic Development**

- Private sector vs. public sector
- Tribal enterprise or service to people
 - Siyeh Corporation Model
 - Tribal ranches
 - Agriculture enterprises
- Become Supplier for local food delivery systems
 - Schools, USDA Commodity programs, Medicine Bear Shelter, Food Banks, Blackfeet FAST, Senior Centers, Traditional Food Preparers

- **Health and Nutrition – Narrow Health Disparities**

- Agriculture production
- Re-introduction of traditional foods into our diets
 - Buffalo
 - Wild game
 - Berries
 - Other foods

- **Infusion of Institutional Knowledge into our Younger Generations**

- Youth programs
 - 4-H
 - High School, Middle School and BCC Agriculture Programs

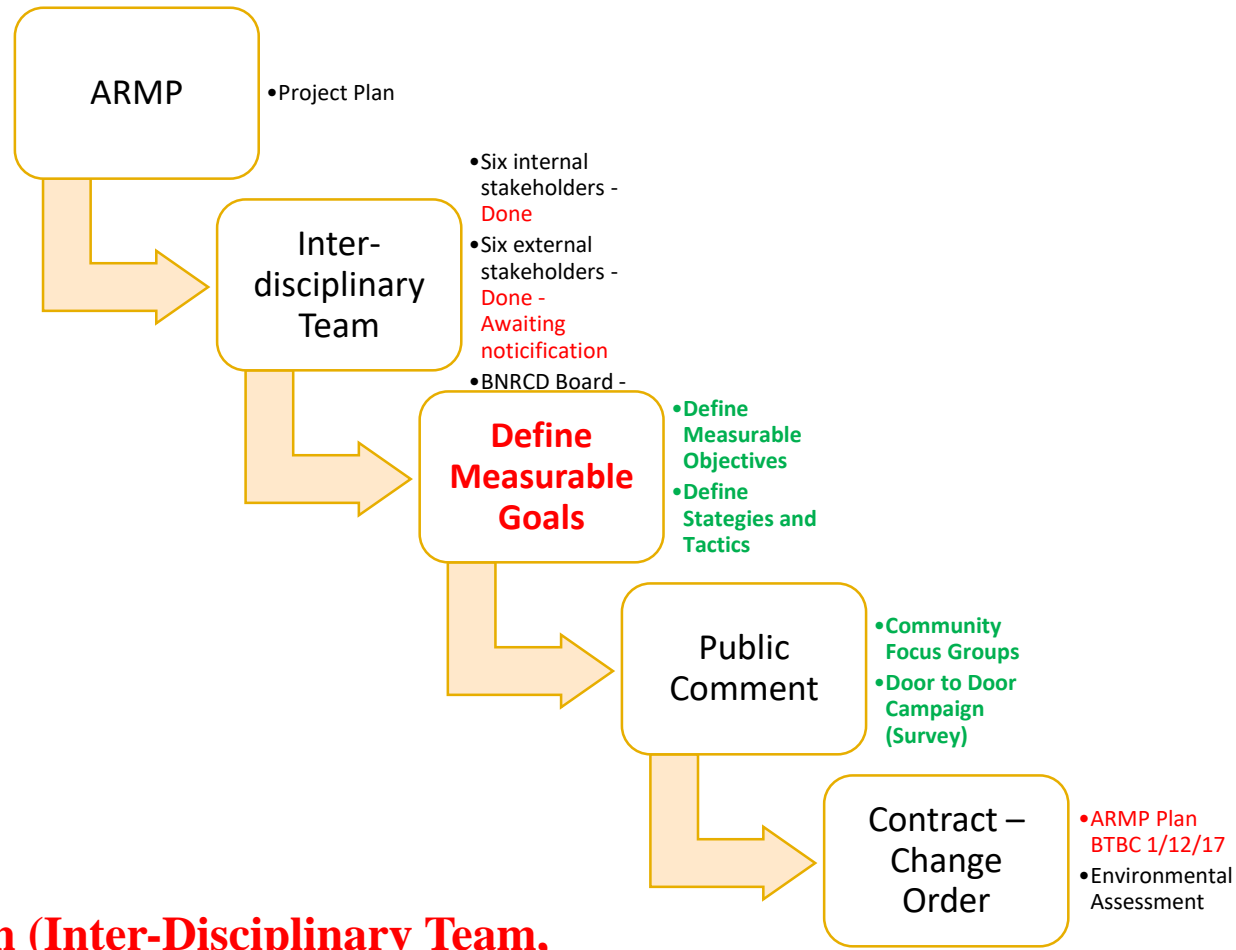


Pre-Planning & Project History



- The Blackfeet Agriculture Resource Management Plan (ARMP) is a project that was created by the Blackfeet Natural Resource Conservation District, a volunteer board established in 1996 by the Blackfeet Tribe, by Tribal Resolution #: 1-97.
- The project was established by a Contract Agreement between the Blackfeet Tribe and the United States Department of Interior's Bureau of Indian Affairs
- Becoming Astute to all of the Moving Parts that the ARMP can effect within the current Tribal Government Structure
 - Land Management
 - Conservation
 - Holistic Management Concepts
 - Water Management
 - Implementation of the agriculture related functions of the Blackfeet Water Compact (800,000 acre feet annually, including rights to all surface water)
 - Agriculture, Farming, and Livestock policy and regulation
 - Administration, Education, Outreach
- Benchmarking

ARMP Process - Methodology



Closed Session (Inter-Disciplinary Team, BNRCD)

Open Session (Stakeholders and Public)

Inter-Disciplinary Team (Continued)



- Planning Sessions (Schedule and Process):
 - The Blackfeet Natural Resources Conservation District and the inter-disciplinary team will define the Mission, Vision, and Goals for the Blackfeet Tribe's ARMP, facilitated by ARMP project manager, Loren BirdRattler (2017 Fourth Quarter)
 - After all of the major goals are established, the inter-disciplinary team and the BNRCD will invite community stakeholders to participate in planning sessions that define the objectives, strategies, and tactics under each major goal, prioritize them, define their timeline, who is responsible, and defined funding sources (2017/2018)
 - Upon completion of the defined goals and objectives, a survey instrument will be created for a door to door campaign and community focus groups to gather additional input. (2018 First Quarter)
 - Accompanying NEPA Assessment (2018 Second Quarter)



Inter-Disciplinary Team



Blackfeet Natural Resource Conservation District

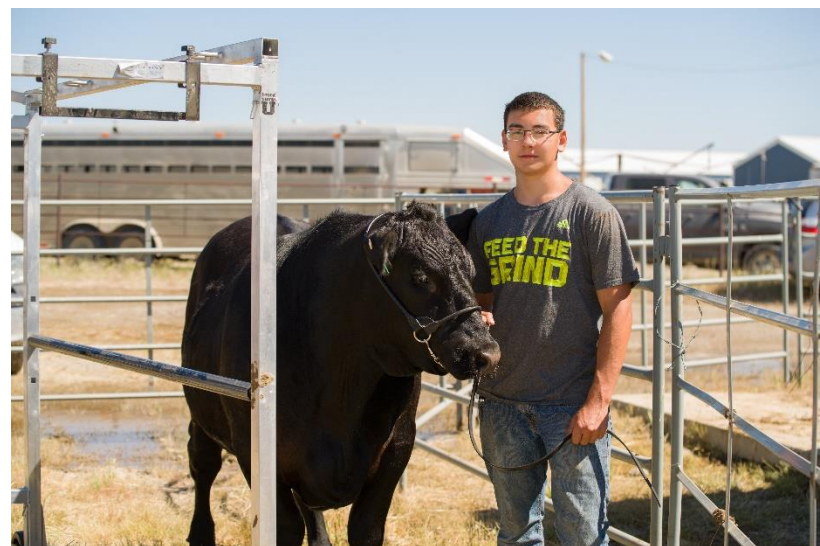
- Emerald Grant, Chairman
- Coco Boggs, Vice Chairman
- Senator Lea Whitford, Secretary
- Honorable Terry Tatsey
- Craig Iron Pipe
- Francis Bird
- Verna Billedeaux
- Anne Stephens

Inter-Disciplinary Team (Continued)



- External Producers and Stakeholders

- Bob Burns - St. Mary/Milk River Watershed
- Joe Kipp - Cut Bank Creek Watershed
- Dan Barcus - Two Medicine Watershed
- Frid England - Badger Creek Watershed
- Wayne Smith Birch Creek Watershed
- Dylan DesRosier, Land Protection Specialist, The Nature Conservancy
- Helen Augare Carlson, Blackfeet Community College
- Kole Fitzpatrick, Intertribal Agriculture Council

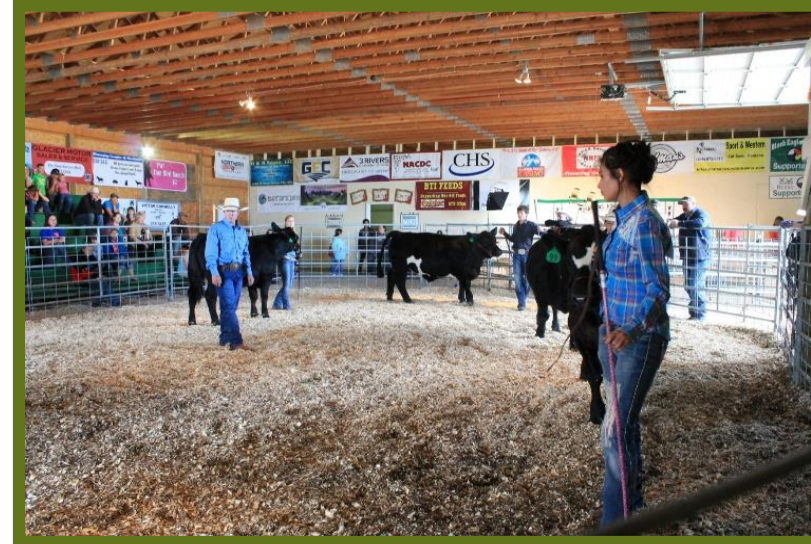


Inter-Disciplinary Team (Continued)



- **Blackfeet Tribal Government Representatives**

- Jerry Lunak, Director of Water Resources, Blackfeet Tribe
- Mark Magee, Director of Land Management, Blackfeet Tribe
- Ervin Carlson, Director of Buffalo Program, Blackfeet Tribe
- Dona Rutherford, Director of Fish and Wildlife
- Gerald Wagner, Director of Environmental, Blackfeet Tribe
- John Murray, Tribal Historic Preservation Office, Blackfeet Tribe



Challenges to Planning and Implementation



- Produce and Write the Plan (Pro's and Con's)
 - Internal
 - Buy In
 - More control over deliverables
 - External
 - Less Control
 - No buy in
- Implementation
 - Current Stressors to Tribal Governments
 - Measurable Goals
 - Measurable Objectives
 - Ties to Human Capital
 - GIS and limited Access Policy
 - Blackfeet Tribe
 - Other Partners

Necessary Partnerships



- University of Arkansas School of Law
 - Indigenous Agriculture and Food Initiative (IAFI)
 - FTE to coordinate food sovereignty efforts
 - Contract to develop food code (Will reside in ARMP office)
 - Define safety standards for commercial agriculture production
 - » Supply local businesses
 - » Supply local school districts
 - » Supply USDA commodities program
 - » Supply other food delivery systems



Necessary Partnerships



- **Montana State University**

- Indigenous Land Tenure Project
 - Unravel jurisdictional and practical complexities to trust land management
 - Indigenous Research Methodologies
 - Research – Protocol and Blackfoot Tribal Priority List
 - » International Borders
 - A Spatial Analysis of Human Development and Indian Land Tenure (Connection between human development indicators and land tenure)
 - Fractionation, Consolidation and Indigenous Planning Responses in Blackfoot Country
 - Principles of Blackfoot Conservation
- Health and Human Development
 - Diversify agriculture profile
 - » Pulse Crops
 - » Produce
 - » Other Cash Crops
 - » Other high vitamin, low starch foods
- Agriculture and Agriculture Economics
 - USDA eligibility requirements
 - Agriculture economics and impacts to local economy

Necessary Partnerships



- University of Guelph (Ontario) or another Canadian Higher Education Institution(s)
 - ICCA
 - Blackfoot Confederacy Protected Area
 - Canadian Conservation Summit
- NGO's
 - The Nature Conservancy
 - United States
 - Canada
 - Western Conservation Society
 - Identify Others
- Other Native Organizations
 - Rocky Mountain Tribal Leaders
 - Other Tribes with Holistic Management Plans

New Spaces for a New Team



- Currently sharing office with three others
- Old Advertising Corporation of America
 - Hydro or Aquaponics for commercial agriculture production
 - Freight or vertical farming
- Involve Youth
 - Revolving Scholarship
 - Feeder system to bolster production and reduce median age of Blackfeet farmers and ranchers



Next Steps For Blackfoot Confederacy



- Confederacy Beef Label (Blackfoot Prime)
 - Supplier to Niche Market
- Innovative Ways for Duty Free Transportation
 - International Export Flexibility
 - Confederacy Border Crossing
- Truth and Reconciliation Commission
 - Recommendations for J Treaty Acceptance in by Canadian Government
 - Other strategies
 - Indian Claims Commission – Blood Tribe Big Claim Inquiry
 - Other Claims by Siksika and Piikani
- Other Efforts Identified During Report Out



Ideas for Measurable Goals and Objectives



- Using soil quality as a part of the appraisal process to help prevent erosion, over grazing, etc. (legislation that creates a directive with a timeframe)
- Getting tribal appraisers credentialed to free up backlog in trust land management
- Taking advantage of all federal, state, county, and other existing programs to help augment defined Blackfeet goals and objectives –
- Making recommendations for appointments to local, state, regional and national boards, commissions and committees to ensure that Blackfeet agriculture producers and stakeholders have a place at policy development tables (Food Safety and Management Act, among others) and training those who are selected to maximize participation and influence
- Make lending opportunities more available to Blackfeet producers through existing, expanded or new revolving loan programs administered both internally and externally
- Create a first right of refusal for Blackfeet producers leasing Blackfeet Tribal (existing or new resolution) or member owned (Trust subjected to BIA regulation) land
- Work across government and organization lines to create standards to eradicate noxious weeds
- Create a Tribal Food Code legislation that protects Native agriculture and food producers and defines regulations and safety standards that are aligned or more stringent than current federal food safety standards to bolster export opportunities and market products thereof
- Create a program that takes advantage of local producers to become suppliers of the USDA Blackfeet and other regional commodities programs, local schools and other entity's
 - Tribal Buffalo
 - Locally produced Cattle
 - Locally produced chickens and hogs
 - Produce

Ideas for Measurable Goals and Objectives (Continued)



- Invest in our youth through established programs like 4H, that will increase the institutional knowledge base of Blackfeet, and to a larger extent, Native farmers and ranchers
- Invest in our youth through established education programs that teach about safety and proper use of farm and ranch equipment, firearms, hunting, fishing and conservation
- Create Tribal Nation of origin labeling (Blackfoot Prime)
- Measure the impact that agriculture has on the local economy and create baseline data for funding opportunities to expand current programs or create new ones
- Through the USDA StrikeForce Initiative, create the first USDA Research Station in Indian Country in our Blackfeet Capital of Browning
- Create policy on animal disease and management
- Write and implement legislation that would create Tribal land conservation standards including creating bird habitat and the first Tribal National Park to bolster conservation efforts while also bolstering cultural tourism, eco-tourism through healthy ecosystems
- Partner with the Army Corp of Engineers or the U.S. Department of Defense to utilize irrigation head gates, irrigation canals and their repair as a training program for military personnel, the labor would be provided as a part of the training programs to update our irrigation systems.
- Use of green and alternative energy methods to help underwrite infrastructure development
- Collaborate and/or partner with local organizations to create a farmer's market that enhances healthy lifestyles and keeps dollars in our local economy (health and buy local)

Agriculture Resource Management Plan



Questions?

