



11TH Annual "TO BRIDGE A GAP" CONFERENCE April 2 – April 5, 2012

The Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma will be hosting the 11th Annual "To Bridge A Gap" Conference, in collaboration with the National Forest Service. This conference is designed to strengthen Government-to-Government relationships between federal/state agencies, and federally-recognized Tribes with interests in our Forests. The Forest Service and Tribal Governments have a desire and obligation to establish Government-to-Government relationships where there are mutual interests in managing the cultural and natural resources of the National Forests. In November of 2009, President Obama issued a White House Memorandum on Tribal Relations. The To Bridge A Gap Conference is a wonderful opportunity to discuss tribal relations and cultural preservation issues, and participate with others whom are dedicated to improving this relationship.

The conference will be held at the Choctaw Casino Resort in Durant, Oklahoma and will provide opportunities for Tribal and Forest Service leaders to share information about their respective missions, perspectives, program activities, and interests.

Topics for this year's To Bridge A Gap will include:

- 1) Introductory GPS/GIS Preconference Workshop
- 2) Repatriation
- 3) Farm Bill and benefits for Tribes and Cultural Preservation
- 4) Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA)
- 5) Tribe and Federal Agreements
- 6) Federal Agency Collection Management
- 7) National Tribal Historic Preservation Program: Updates and Application Process
- 8) Traditional Cultural Properties and Sacred Sites
- 9) Tribal/Federal Relations and Collaborative Partnerships
- 10) NEPA and Section 106
- 11) Executive Session for Tribal Leaders and Regional Forest Service Leadership
- 12) FCC Consultation Meeting with Tribes

Keynote Speaker: To Be Announced

Several federal and state agencies will be present including National Forest Service from various regions, Army Corp. of Engineers, State Historic Preservation Offices, National Park Service, and National Resources Conservation Service.

For more information please contact Dr. Ian Thompson, Tribal Historic Preservation Officer, Choctaw Nation, Historic Preservation Department at (580) 924-8280 Ext. 2216, ithompson@choctawnation.com, or Ms. Johnnie Jacobs at (580) 924-8280 Ext. 2559, jjacobs@choctawnation.com.

Conference registration and hotel information can also be found on the Choctaw Nation Historic Preservation Department website at www.choctawnationculture.com/TBAG2012.