

# Sac and Fox Nation Office of Environmental Services — Burn Ban

By Daniel Wind

It was recently suggested that a topic for an article could be the Burn Ban in Oklahoma. With the recent conditions of drought and the spread of wildfires, I thought this was a great idea. This also recounts my own personal experience with a wildfire on my grandmother's land in Shawnee. Waking up to smoke and seeing fire 30 feet away at our fence line in the middle of the night wasn't fun. So in this article I would like to discuss what conditions must exist for a burn ban to be implemented.

While the Governor still has the authority to declare state burn bans, in 2008 Governor Brad Henry signed a bill, Senate law 1816, into legislation that gave the County Board of Commissioners the authorization to declare a ban on outdoor burning at the county level based on certain conditions and certain restrictions. Guidelines for this declaration have been produced and are located at [www.forestry.ok.gov](http://www.forestry.ok.gov). Below are some of the major points of those guidelines.

"Prior to passage of a burn-ban resolution, the Board must declare the existence of extreme fire danger. As defined by law, extreme fire danger means all four of the following conditions exist.

1. Moderate, severe, or extreme drought conditions exist with the county as determined by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). [http://www.drought.unl.edu/dm/DM\\_state.htm?OK](http://www.drought.unl.edu/dm/DM_state.htm?OK)

2. No more than one-half inch of precipitation is forecast by the National Weather Service for the next three days. Websites for Oklahoma's four National Weather Service Forecast Offices are located at the following addresses:

Norman- <http://www.srh.noaa.gov/oun>  
Tulsa-<http://www.srh.noaa.gov/tsa/>  
Amarillo- <http://www.srh.noaa.gov/ama/>  
Shreveport - <http://www.srh.noaa.gov/shv/>

3. Fire occurrence is significantly greater than normal for the season and/or initial attack on a significant number of wildland fires has been unsuccessful due to extreme fire behavior,

4. More than 20% of the wildfires in the county have been caused by escaped debris burning or controlled burning activities." (Forestry Service Burn Ban Guidelines)

The resolution that must be passed to declare a burn ban can only be effective for 30 days. Of course the resolution can be cancelled or reinstated after the original resolution has expired as long as these conditions are met.

Sac and Fox Nation Jurisdiction contain three counties: Lincoln, Payne, and parts of Pottawatomie. The resolutions for these counties are posted on the forestry website and all three county resolutions contain the following:

"...It is unlawful for any person to set fire to any forest, grass, range, crop or other wildlands, or to build a campfire, bonfire, or to burn trash or other material that may cause a forest, grass, range, crop or other wildlands fire."

This is something we need to remember as we want to burn trash or fire up those grills for burgers. Not only is it risky but it is illegal. Citations by local law enforcement for those burning during a burn ban have increased. As recently as April 12th, the daily Oklahoman has reported that three people have been charged with burning during a burn ban and that the charges carried a potential \$500 fine and one year in jail.

During these times of drought, minimal precipitation, and high winds it is important to remember that it only takes one ember to escape and start a fire that can cause extensive damage to land, homes, and even threaten lives. So before we throw out that cigarette, burn trash, or even fire up that grill we all need to be aware of the potential fire risk and take the appropriate precautions, even when we're not in a Burn Ban. While we don't want the bill for fire damages, we also don't want to put ourselves, our family or anyone else at risk because of our careless actions. Luckily the night my grandmother's pasture caught fire there were no other damages than the 5+ acres of land that were burned. Watching recent news stories you can see where other people weren't so lucky.

Current Burn Bans within Sac and Fox Nation Jurisdiction:

**Lincoln County:**

April 4th-May 3rd

**Payne County:**

April 18th-May 15th

**Pottawatomie County:**

April 5th - May 4th.

By the time you read this most of the current Burn Bans will have expired but unless the drought conditions change these bans can be reinstated.

## SFN Office Of Environmental Services Water Well Testing

*Jeremy Fincher, Environmental Specialist*

The Office of Environmental Services (OES) would like to thank all of the participants that signed up for the free private well water testing program. The program was offered through OES and is funded by EPA. After having such a great turnout this year I am working to increase

the funding so the program can expand to incorporate more tribal members in the coming years. Testing will begin in May and then be followed by a second round of testing in late August and/or early September for the members currently signed up.



**OCAITHB Board Members 2011:** From left, Seated: Tom John (Ada), Steve Ortis (Holton, KS), Mickey Percy (Talihina), John R Ballard (Claremore). From left, Standing: Chris Tall Bear (Clinton), Seneca Smith (Lawton), J.T. Petherick (Tahlequah), Marshal Gover (Pawnee), Cheryl McClellan (Shawnee), Diddy Nelson (OCAITHB Ex Director), RADM Kevin Meeks (OCA Area Director). Absent: Diane Autaubo (Wewoka), Edwin McLemore (Okemah), Nick Gonzales (Eagle Pass, TX) (Photo Submitted)

## Oklahoma City Area Inter-Tribal Health Board

The Oklahoma City Area Inter-Tribal Health Board (OCAITHB) is a non-profit organization based in Oklahoma City, OK. The board was established in 1972 to provide a unified voice on health related issues for the 42 tribes located in the states of Kansas, Oklahoma, and Texas. Board of Directors

membership includes representatives from the 12 service units in the Indian Health Service Oklahoma City Area. Sac and Fox Nation Second Chief Cheryl McClellan is now serving as the primary member on the OCAITHB Board of Directors representing the Shawnee Service Unit.

### SAC AND FOX NATION 2011 ADMINISTRATIVE HOLIDAYS

(Dates Offices are Closed)

Sac & Fox Victory Day .....	Monday, May 16, 2011
Memorial Day .....	Monday, May 30, 2011
Independence Day .....	Monday, July 4, 2011
Native American Day .....	Monday July 11, 2011

### HELP WANTED!

#### SAC & FOX NATION EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

THE FOLLOWING IS A LIST OF JOB VACANCIES WITH

THE SAC & FOX NATION:

- Environmental Technician
- Executive Assistant
- Surveillance Observer
- Indian Child Welfare Specialist
- Compliance Officer
- Licensed Clinical Social Worker
- Substance Abuse Counselor
- Receptionist/Secretary
- Resident Advisor
- Accounting Technician II

Applicants must successfully pass an OSBI/National background check and drug screen. Preference in hiring is given to qualified Native Americans. Applicants claiming Indian Preference must provide a copy of their CDIB. For more information and to learn how to apply please visit our website at:

[www.sacandfoxnation.com](http://www.sacandfoxnation.com)

or contact Human Resources, Sac and Fox Nation, 920883 S Hwy 99, Bldg. A Stroud, OK 74079 or by phone (918) 968-4837

## Attention Landowners! 90 Day Notices

The Sac and Fox Nation Realty Department annually holds a farming and grazing bid sale of Sac and Fox allotted lands. This year the bid sale will be held for lands with an agriculture lease that expires on 12/31/2011.

Notices were sent to the landowners 90 days prior to the auction. In the 90 day notice, landowners are notified of the following:

- 1.) the tract(s), legal description(s), and owner interest of the land(s) that will be in the bid sale,
- 2.) that co-owners may contact the Realty Department to negotiate a lease with the majority of interest owners and present the negotiated lease to the Realty Director within 90 days of the date of the notice,
- 3.) Should a co-owner be able to negotiate a lease with the majority of interest owners within the 90 days, that tract will not be advertised in the bid sale.

The Realty Department will provide any information you may need to negotiate a lease with a lessee of your choice, however, it will be the landowner's responsibility to obtain consents from the landowners.

Should you have any questions regarding 90 day notices or the bid sale process, please contact the Realty Department at 918-968-3526.

## Happy May Birthday Elders!!

- Reginald Ashley
- Judy Anita Baggett
- Sammy Lee Bass
- Ronald M. Bemo Sr.
- Billie F. Berry
- Alden Gene Blanchard
- Myra K. Bohannan
- Ricky Dean Brice
- Robin Gaye Brown
- Edgar Thomas Butler
- Robert David Chaney Jr.
- Ms. Lena Leota Clark
- Rosalyn G. Clinkenbeard
- Timothy H. Dean
- Peggy Ann Dixon
- Odell M. Dowd
- Carmon R. Falls
- Theresa Sue Ferguson
- Rebecca Jeanne French
- Michael David Gibbs
- Jo Anne Gilman
- Shalah Louise Grass
- Barbara Ladon Hale
- Imogene Haley
- Barbara Jane Harshberger
- Katherine Sue Higgs
- Elizabeth Ann Hocker
- Carla Dean Honeyestewa



- Elvita Louise Jefferson
- Carmelia Ketcher
- Gail Ruth Marez
- David Edward Meek
- Vada Rose Meek
- Cathleen Dolores Mikulski
- Edward L. O'Brien III
- Ida Louise Parish
- Richard Wayne Phillips
- Michael John Pimley
- Janice Lee Riche
- Bobbie L. Shawn
- Judy K. Stephens
- Gwendolyn J. Switch
- Betty Taber
- Joan Josephine Thorpe
- Mary Sue Truitt
- Debra Elaine Wakole
- Maxine Carol Wakolee
- Joy Ellen Walkin
- Rex D. Watts
- Pauline Sue Webb
- Robert Alexander Whistler
- Gloria Gay Williams
- Edith Verlayne Wilson
- Harry Dewayne Wood
- Patricia R. Yarbrough
- Melva Ladawn York

