

# WTCAC Newsletter

WISCONSIN TRIBAL CONSERVATION ADVISORY COUNCIL

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# WTCAC Student Logo Project

## Participant: Cody Cottrell

My name is Cody Cottrell, or Tekayanalow<sup>^</sup>nasè, I am a proud father and husband. I am an enrolled member of Oneida Nation and a member of the wolf clan. I also descend from Chippewa, Stockbridge, Pequot, and German peoples. I serve as a member on the Oneida Nation Arts Board.

I have always been inspired by art in all of its forms. I briefly attended the Milwaukee Institute of Art & Design before returning home to Green Bay and working for Oneida Nation's Recreation Program for nearly eight years. I currently work for the Boy's and Girl's Club of Greater Green Bay as a Graduation Coach. I credit my rekindled love for the arts to working with youth and helping them find their creative spirit. I hope to be a full-time artist with a business of my own and to help further strengthen the sovereignty of my people through art. I was interested in this project to further develop my design skills, portfolio, and experience working with different clientele to meet their needs. I am very proud of the designs I was able to present for consideration for the new logo of WTCAC, conservation is something I am very passionate about and being to able to represent that through my indigenous heritage was a privilege.



If you'd like to connect with me or learn more about my art, you can visit [hummingbirdartdesign.com](http://hummingbirdartdesign.com) or I can be reached via email at [hummingbirdartdesign@gmail.com](mailto:hummingbirdartdesign@gmail.com).

I also have the following art focused social media accounts:  
[facebook.com/hummingbirdartdesign/](https://facebook.com/hummingbirdartdesign/)  
[instagram.com/hummingbirdartdesign/](https://instagram.com/hummingbirdartdesign/)  
#indigenousartist #nativeamericanartist  
#featuredartist #oneida

# Cody Cottrell Contest Designs



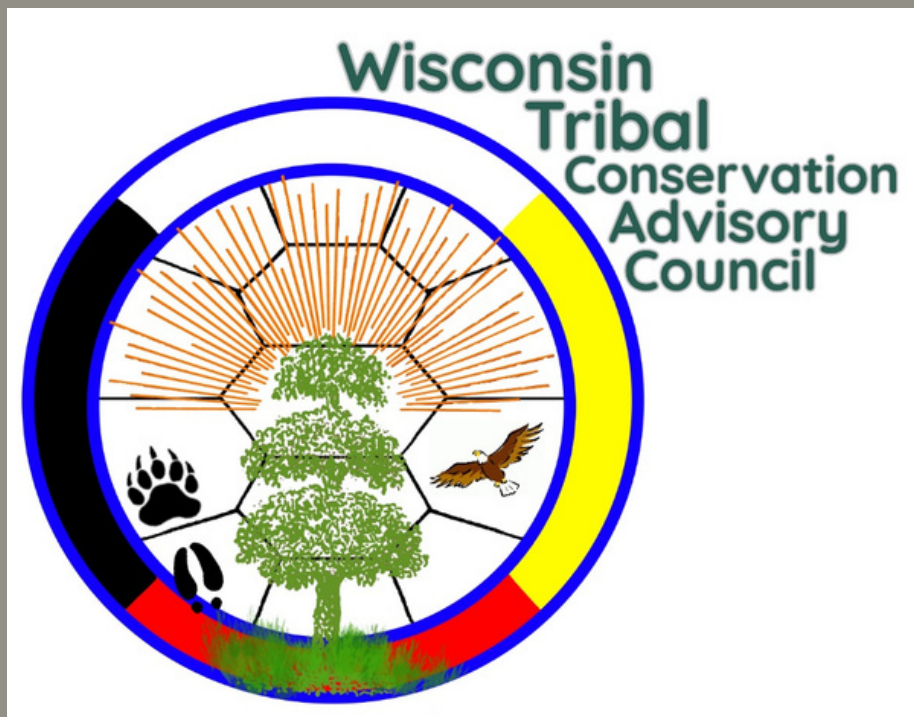
# WTCAC Student Logo Project

## Participant: Emerald Otradovec



My name is Emerald Otradovec. I am enrolled Oneida, member of the Turtle Clan. I attend College of Menominee Nation, I am studying Digital Media and Liberal Studies with an emphasis on Humanities. I enjoy being creative, I've been working with graphic design for years on an amateur level. If I'm not working on something with graphic design I'm writing, doing photography, in class, or working. I was interested in this project because it's a chance to get experience with logo designs and presenting them. I quite enjoyed my logo designs, I thought they would give a contemporary look for WTCAC.

# Emerald Otradovec Contest Designs



# Meet WTCAC's New Community Conservationist

My name is Abi Fergus (they/them) and I am excited to get started with WTCAC in the new role of Community Conservationist. This position fits right in with my passion for regenerative agriculture and ecological stewardship. In my education and work, I have learned from some of the traditional and ongoing stewardship and agriculture practices of Anishinaabeg. I am looking forward to learning about the many other cultures and practices of the people that WTCAC serves.



Most of my career outside of my education has been with Mashkiiziibii Natural Resources Department in various roles with the wildlife program. I grew up on Potawatomi land on Lake Michigan and studied biology and environmental policy near the Saginaw-Chippewa Tribe in central Michigan. I studied carnivore coexistence, indigenous stewardship, and relationship building between Western scientists, farmers, and tribal communities during my master's at UW-Madison in the Nelson Institute and the Carnivore Coexistence Lab. Now I live in the Penokees with my canine companion Juniper. She's been training to be a scent dog who can help with conservation practices like wildlife tracking.

I will be reaching out to the communities we serve to gather input on what areas support is needed toward doing climate change adaptation through regenerative agriculture and ecological conservation. I will also offer ideas, experience, and passion of my own. Some examples of what I can offer to communities from my own experience includes carnivore coexistence strategies on livestock farms, wildlife tracking workshops, beekeeping, and wildcrafting medicinal and food plants and mushrooms. I am working under a grant and the WTCAC mission to help connect tribal members and organizations to USDA resources and funding, which is set to increase over the next few years as a result of monies from the Inflation Reduction Act recently passed.

If you have ideas for how we can work together, please reach out! My email is [afergus@wtcac.org](mailto:afergus@wtcac.org).



## Meet WTCAC's Winter Intern



Hello, my name is Jaylynn Brisk a member of the Menominee nation and a student at UW- Steven's Point. I am WTCAC's winter intern. I am very thankful to have this opportunity to work here at WTCAC.

It was fun making informative posts and learning all about invasive species here in Wisconsin. Along with learning about many invasive species.





# Tribal Regenerative Agriculture Workshop: Northeast WI, August 2022

TRIBAL REGENERATIVE AGRICULTURE WORKSHOPS: A  
TRADITIONAL APPROACH

By Tom Melnarik, Gregory Gauthier, and Jonathan Pruitt

Last August, the Oneida Nation, Forest County Potawatomi, the Mole Lake Band of Lake Superior Chippewa, and the Menominee Indian Tribe of Wisconsin hosted a second round of regenerative agriculture tours. At Oneida, we saw their Buffalo Overlook where we were taught the grazing system used there and special considerations for raising buffalo. Then we visited the Kahulahele farmstead where Jennifer Falck and Tony Kuchma have incorporated NRCS cost-sharing into traditional farming practices. They raise chickens, turkeys, pigs, cows, and goats along with a nice garden and hoop house area for vegetables. Tony explained to us some of the challenges of working with USDA programs but sent the message that it is worth the work. They also have a solar panel system that helps with their electricity usage.

Our next visit was to the Ukwakhwa farmstead where Rebecca and Stephen Webster gave us of tour of their hoop house and garden plots and served us a dinner featuring indigenous foods. Of note, there is a commercially certified kitchen on site, where they prepare food for community events and trainings.

My take home from the Oneida Nation farmstead tours was not just their willingness to share their successes and problems, but the emphasis they place on community, providing for elders, indigenous seed banks and using a barter system to let people exchange goods and services instead of just using money.







## Tribal Regenerative Agriculture Workshop: Northeast WI, August 2022

The next day of the August tour was at Bodwe'wadmi Ktegan, the Forest County Potawatomi Farm where farm manager Dave Cronauer and assistant farm manager Joe Shepard showed the group the amazing diversity of their operation. An aquaponics system, a grazing operation for cattle and bison, pasture raised pigs, free range chickens, an orchard, a modern maple sap processing facility, and multiple hoop houses all provide food for elders and local schools. Some of their excess is sold to the general public at a state-of-the-art onsite farm store. They also showed a composting process used on the farm.

Following the tour of Bodwe'wadmi Ktegan, the group then traveled to Mole Lake where the Mole Lake Band of Lake Superior Chippewa have resided since their migration from Lake Superior. As the story goes, their ancestors were instructed to find "the food that grows on the water" known as manoomin or wild rice. This lake (Rice Lake) is sacred to the Tribe and has provided many outstanding rice harvests ever since. They have proactively cared for the rice, removing lily pads and reseeding areas where the rice had begun to decline. This years' harvest was one of their best in decades.

Tina VanZile, natural resources director for Sokaogon, gave us an outstanding tour interspersed with personal stories of rice chiefs, elders, traditional rice processing, and the value that is still placed on the rice to this day. This assures that future generations will value the rice just as much.

Dinner that evening was hosted by Chef Francisco Alegrin and Leah Husby at the Menominee Recreation Center. Chef Alegrin spoke about growing up on the reservation and the connections to his Menominee and Hispanic heritage. He began his culinary journey as a hibachi chef but changed his direction after meeting other indigenous chefs. For him, it was inspirational, and he began to cook indigenous foods at home in Menominee and started his own catering business.

On Friday, the last day of the tour, the group met with Dr. David Overstreet, Jeff Grignon, Gary Besaw, and Dr. William Gartner to discuss their research project on the history of traditional Menominee gardens, Ancestral Menominee Forest Agricultural Practices, and the Menominee Indian Tribe of Wisconsin's food sovereignty initiatives. The group then visited Menikanaehkem, Menominee Rebuilders, farm where they were shown hoop houses and garden beds. Guy Reiter spoke about the history of Menikanaehkem and their goals for the people on food sovereignty. One way is to support healthy, culturally rich activities and create safe spaces for troubled youth, allowing them to flourish and have a more positive outlook on helping the community, for themselves to become teachers in the end. That is one way the non-profit is using agriculture as an outlet for the youth.

## Tribal Regenerative Agriculture Workshop: Northeast WI, August 2022

Marcus Grignon, another member on the site showed us his SARE (Sustainable Agricultural Research and Education program) project, Integrated Pest Management Research on Great Lakes Hemp Production. He showed the group how well his hemp plants were doing with different types of soil tillage methods. He also showed us how hemp can be grown for pest management on cropland. Menominee Nation plans to raise bison in the near future (on-site as of this publication) and Adam Abel, NRCS Grazing Specialist for the state of Wisconsin, spoke about his experience creating and evaluating rotational grazing plans. Adam emphasized the importance of leaving what's called 'the residual' when grazing livestock to ensure a continuous supply of food for your herd. He said that it takes just as long for grass to grow from 4 inches to 12 inches as it does to grow from nothing to 4 inches. Rotating livestock from one paddock to another before they can eat past that residual is key.

Many of the lunches and dinners for the July and August regenerative agriculture workshops were prepared and catered by Wild Bearies and Chef Elena Terry. Wild Bearies is a Ho-Chunk startup business that prepares delicious indigenous cuisine Check out their page Facebook Page!

The workshops were attended by tribal members and natural resource staff from Ho-Chunk, Oneida, Forest County Potawatomi, Menominee, and Mole Lake. Thank you to all of the presenters and everyone that made the workshops a success!



# WTCAC Agriculture Subcommittee

## Meeting

By Abi Fergus

On Tuesday May 3, WTCAC and Stockbridge-Munsee hosted a workshop about NRCS Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) at Keek-Oche (From the Earth Farm). Eighteen participants consisting of Tribal producers as well as WTCAC, USDA, and IAC staff came together to tour Keek-Oche's operations including greenhouses, an orchard, and produce fields. The group then sat down to hear primarily from USDA NRCS Sherrie Zenk-Reed on how applying for EQIP practices works. The example of high tunnels was used primarily, but some other EQIP practices like grazing and pollinator planting were also covered. The discussion was directed by the needs and interest of the producers who were present.


Keek-Oche began in 2017 with the produce fields and has been growing since with the planting of an orchard and installation of currently 3 greenhouses. This was a great opportunity to tour an early, small scale farm doing sustainable farming.

Each Tribal nation in Wisconsin has a NRCS liaison. For example Sherrie Zenk-Reed is the liaison for Stockbridge-Munsee, Oneida, and Menominee. These liaisons work more directly with Tribal governments, but they can also help direct individual Tribal producers to their NRCS agent. You can also find your local USDA office at the following website: <https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/contact/find-a-service-center>

Meeting with your NRCS agent is the first step in exploring what EQIP practices might be reimbursable on your cropland or forestland. The EQIP process entails support from your NRCS agent every step of the way and is a good opportunity to get a cost-share for remediating resource concerns such as erosion or a short growing season.

Previously, an EQIP workshop was also offered at Whirling Thunder farm for Ho-Chunk producers. WTCAC and USDA NRCS are available to offer these workshops in other Tribal communities too. Applications can be submitted for EQIP at any time, but NRCS processes applications and determines awardees twice a year: May and November.





## Wisconsin Tribes: Leading the way in protecting and restoring wetlands and watersheds

Four new videos produced by the Wisconsin Tribal Conservation Advisory Council, Wisconsin Wetlands Association, and USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service highlight the work of the Bad River and Red Cliff Bands of the Lake Superior Tribe of Chippewa Indians in Northern Wisconsin. The long-term landscape approach both the Bad River and Red Cliff Bands take to protect and manage their reservations is maintaining high water quality, managing flood waters, and providing vital habitat. It's also helping to sustain their culture and way of life. The healthier natural environment provides opportunities for their people to hunt, fish, and gather what nature has provided and establishes relationships that will build a stronger community today and for future generations. These videos are part of a larger initiative by the partners to raise awareness of the vital work Tribes in Wisconsin are doing to protect and restore wetlands and watersheds. View the videos at [wisconsinwetlands.org/WiTribesCaringForWetlands](http://wisconsinwetlands.org/WiTribesCaringForWetlands).

### Protecting our Waters: Watershed Conservation and Red Cliff Band of Lake Superior Chippewa





Water is Life: Watershed Conservation and the Bad River Band of Lake Superior Chippewa



Preserving a way of Life: Wetland Conservation and the Bad River Band of Lake Superior Chippewa





# Managing Watersheds in an Age of Climate Change: the Bad River Band of Lake Superior Chippewa



Produced in Partnership with



JOIN US!

# Basket Makers Ash Resource Gathering



She:kon/Hello ,

This year the Saint Regis Mohawk Tribe (Tribe) and the Akwesasne Task Force on the Environment (ATFE) will hold a Basket Makers Ash Resource gathering on July 24-26, 2023. The focus of this gathering is to provide basket makers with an update on the status of threatened ash resources and the Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) and to help plan for the future of ash basketry.

We know of your expertise on matters of EAB, ash management and the impacts on Native American/First Nations natural resources and cultural practices. Several of our speakers will be providing regional updates and discussing management options. Field trips are being planned to demonstrate on the ground EAB ash management efforts. We know that you have many other commitments and responsibilities, but hope that you can fit this invitation into your calendar.

The event will be held on the Mohawk Territory of Akwesasne at the Atsiakta conference and event center located on the shore of the St. Lawrence River in the very heart of our Mohawk community. The event will be providing daily meals and refreshments.

It would be very helpful in formalizing our plans if we could receive your response by June 1, 2023. We sincerely hope you will be able to join us on July 24-26.

Sken:nen/Peace

Les Benedict

For more information about registering for this event, please contact:  
Les Benedict ([les.benedict@srmt-nsn.gov](mailto:les.benedict@srmt-nsn.gov))

# WTCAC SUMMER INTERNSHIP PROGRAM 2023

The Wisconsin Tribal Conservation Advisory Council is providing a variety of internship experiences for Native American students interested in Natural Resources and Agriculture!

This is a 10-week internship that starts in June and ends in August

Pays \$16/Hour

**APPLY NOW**

**Visit the WTCAC website for more information**

#### Internship Opportunities with:

- Wisconsin Tribal Nations
- UW Extension
- Natural Resources Conservation Service
- Animal Plant Health Inspection Service
- Forest Service
- National Agricultural Statistics Services

#### Minimum Qualifications:

- 18 years or older
- Enrolled full time in a college or university in Wisconsin
- Enrolled in a federally recognized Tribe in Wisconsin
- Cumulative GPA of 2.5 or higher







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