

BIA Timber Team — Fiscal Year 2026 Accomplishments Report

Executive Summary

Building on stewardship and revenue-focused priorities, the BIA Timber Team delivered an extensive schedule of forestry support throughout Fiscal Year (FY) 2026. Despite persistent staffing shortages, the Team provided dependable, high-quality technical assistance to Tribal Nations across Indian Country, advancing forest management planning, commercial timber objectives, habitat improvement needs, and long-term stewardship goals. Projects were completed with 12 Tribes across nine states including remote GIS support. These efforts reflect the federal trust responsibility and the Team's commitment to shared stewardship and sustainable forest outcomes.



Photo 1: *Timber Team members hike steep, rugged terrain in southwest Colorado while supporting FY 2026 projects across Indian Country.*

Policy Alignment: Executive Orders and Trust Responsibilities

In 2026, the Timber Team’s work supported national priorities and legal responsibilities by promoting sound forest management, efficient project delivery, and strong partnerships with Tribal Nations.

- **Executive Order 14225 (Immediate Expansion of American Timber Production)** directs Interior and Agriculture to enhance forest management, expedite timber delivery, and leverage tools such as stewardship contracting, Good Neighbor Authority, and Tribal Forest Protection Act agreements—improving speed and certainty for forestry projects.
- **Executive Order 14210 (Workforce Efficiency and Productivity)** emphasizes streamlined operations, Agency Reorganization Plans, and formal Tribal consultation—reinforcing the Team’s focus on coordination, scheduling efficiency, and responsive service to Tribal priorities.
- **NIFRMA (25 U.S.C. Chapter 33)** affirms the United States’ trust responsibility for Indian forest lands and requires management consistent with Tribal objectives and values. The Timber Team’s technical assistance—planning, implementing, and documenting forestry activities—directly advances this statutory duty.



Photo 2: *Timber Team foresters work in all weather conditions, from rain, sleet, and snow to bright sunshine, to support timely, effective forest project delivery.*

FY 2026 Field Accomplishments

From January through September, the Timber Team completed a broad range of on-the-ground services: timber sale layout and boundary marking, timber cruising, CFI, stand examinations, regeneration surveys, silvicultural prescription development, seedling planting, and GIS forest cover type mapping.

Quantitative accomplishments included:

- 139 continuous forest inventory (CFI) plots
- 25 stand examinations
- 51 regeneration surveys
- 264 timber cruise plots
- ~2,391 acres prepared for timber sales, thinning, or harvest
- 350 swamp white oak seedlings hand-planted (Menominee Indian Tribe)
- 58,291 acres of forest cover type mapping redrawn (Anadarko & Horton Agencies)
- Services to 12 Tribal Nations; 9 states visited; 24 weeks of travel



Photo 3: *Foresters establish continuous forest inventory (CFI) plots in northern California.*

Project Highlights by Tribe and Region

- Quinault Indian Nation (WA, Northwest) — 60 timber cruise plots; 51 stand exam plots.
- Fond du Lac Band of Lake Superior Chippewa (MN, Midwest) — 102 acres prepped; 25 stand exam plots.
- Karuk Tribe (CA, Pacific) — 40 CFI plots.
- Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians (NC, Eastern) — 52 acres prepped; elk habitat restoration prescription.
- Ute Mountain Ute Tribe (CO, Southwest) — 19 CFI plots.
- Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs (OR, Northwest) — 111 timber cruise plots.
- Menominee Indian Tribe of Wisconsin (WI, Midwest) — 127 acres prepped; 350 swamp white oak seedlings planted.

- Mi'kmaq Nation (ME, Eastern) — 80 CFI plots.
- Hoh Tribe (WA, Northwest) — 230 acres prepared for commercial thinning.
- Lower Elwha Tribal Community (WA, Northwest) — 46 acres prepared for commercial harvest.
- Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation (WA, Northwest) — 1,630 acres of sale layout and boundary marking (largest single project in 2026).
- Anadarko & Horton Agencies (KS–NE–OK, Southern Plains) — 58,291 acres of forest cover type mapping redrawn (remote support).



Photo 4: *Timber Team forester monumenting a harvest unit corner tree to on a timber sale in eastern Washington.*

Revitalizing Timber Programs in Puget Sound

The Timber Team supported significant timber sale preparation for the Hoh Tribe and Lower Elwha Tribal Community, assisting with their first timber sales in more than 50 years. These efforts mark important steps in revitalizing long-dormant forest product programs and strengthening long-term Tribal capacity for sustainable timber operations.



Photo 5: *Timber Team foresters discussing boundary layout and silviculture prescriptions on a timber sale in northwest Washington.*

Shared Stewardship & Elk Habitat Restoration (Southern Appalachians)

In the southern Appalachians, the Team led development of a silvicultural prescription to improve elk habitat across Tribal Trust acres, emphasizing an oak–hickory forest structure. Through field reconnaissance, stand-condition evaluation, and targeted treatment identification, the work enhanced wildlife habitat while honoring long-term ecological and cultural resource priorities—illustrating the Team’s commitment to multi-objective, ecosystem-oriented management.



Photo 6: *Timber Team foresters collect regeneration data in western North Carolina to inform silvicultural prescriptions designed to enhance elk habitat while supporting Tribal stewardship objectives.*

Remote GIS Support and Planning Capacity

Alongside field projects, the Team provided critical remote GIS support to the Anadarko and Horton Agencies, redrawing 58,291 acres of forest cover type mapping. This work improves data accuracy and strengthens Tribal capacity for long-term forest planning, aligning with EO 14225's emphasis on efficient project delivery and EO 14210's focus on operational streamlining and Tribal consultation.



Photo 7: *Timber Team foresters use ArcGIS Pro to update Tribal forest cover type maps, improving the efficiency and accuracy of forest planning.*

Trust Responsibility Under NIFRMA

Consistent with NIFRMA (25 U.S.C. Chapter 33), the United States bears a trust responsibility to manage Indian forest lands in a manner that reflects Tribal objectives and values—economic, ecological, and cultural. The Timber Team’s efforts in FY 2026—data collection, sale layout, stand exams, regeneration surveys, silvicultural prescriptions, and seedling planting—are practical expressions of this statutory duty, delivered in partnership with Tribal forestry programs.



Photo 8: *Foresters assist Tribes with forest development activities, including regeneration surveys and planting-survival assessments, to inform decisions about precommercial thinning and other silvicultural treatments.*

Looking Ahead: Preparing for a Busy FY 2027 Across Indian Country

With project requests increasing, the Timber Team is actively building a robust FY 2027 schedule that continues EO-aligned, trust-responsive service delivery across regions.

Early itinerary highlights include the following planned projects and activities:

- Hualapai Reservation (AZ) — Timber Sale Prep, October 13–23, 2026
- Choctaw Nation (OK) — Timber Cruising, November 9–20, 2026
- Grand Portage Band (MN) — Timber Sale Prep, November 30–December 11, 2026
- Menominee Reservation (WI) — Timber Sale Prep, January 19–29, 2027
- Hoh Tribe (WA) — Timber Sale Prep, February 16–26, 2027
- Pawnee Agency (OK) — CFI, March 8–19, 2027
- Fort Apache (AZ) — FS Cruiser Training, March 29–April 4, 2027
- Participation in the 50th Annual ITC Symposium (San Carlos Host Tribe, AZ), April 5–9, 2027
- Fort Apache (AZ) — Timber Cruising & Salvage, April 26–May 7, 2027
- Spokane Reservation (WA) — Timber Sale Prep, May 17–28, 2027

- Suquamish Tribe (WA) — Stand Exams, August 16–27, 2027
- Confederated Tribes of Coos, Lower Umpqua, & Siuslaw (OR) — Timber Sale Prep & Perenniality Surveys, September 13–24, 2027

Additional projects are anticipated in June and July 2027 and remain to be determined. As remaining requests are processed and dates are confirmed, a finalized itinerary will be distributed.



Photo 9: *Timber Team foresters collect timber-cruising data for Tribes in central Oregon to support management prescriptions, including overstory removal, commercial thinning, and shelterwood harvests.*

Conclusion

FY 2026 accomplishments demonstrate the Timber Team’s resilience, reliability, and dedication to Tribal forest stewardship, economic opportunity, and resource sustainability. Guided by EO 14225 and EO 14210, and grounded in NIFRMA’s trust responsibility, the Team stands prepared for a demanding and productive FY 2027—continuing to provide responsive, high-quality forestry services across Indian Country.