

Apple Orchard Revitalization 2015

Connie M. Watson, BALAC Project Coordinator

In the September, 2015 several members of the Bay Mills Indian Community mentioned the abundance of apple trees in the community no longer producing apples. Trees located in the farms area of the reservation off of Plantation Road, became a topic of conversation; stories shared and talk of a once thriving apple production. This area in the 1960's had many producing apples trees used mainly for applesauce, apple butter, preserves, and followed by a hunting area for wild game. Over time and no farming activity the apple trees fell into neglect. The forest grew, the apple trees became over grown, lacked sunlight, and bared little fruit.

Bay Mills Community Health's Bemidji Area Leaders Acting for Change (BALAC) a grant program with Great Lakes Inter-tribal Epidemiology Center (GLITC), a 5 year (2015-2019) initiative with the Center of Disease Control *Good Health and Wellness in Indian Country* teamed up with the Bay Mills Fire Team to revitalize the apple trees. The Bay Mills Fire Team needed chain saw training and certification and the apple orchard needed clear cutting. As a result, Apple Orchard Revitalization Phase I began. The Fire Team cleared the way for the once thriving apple trees to receive much needed sunlight and air to produce fruit. Phase II of the project will begin in the winter of 2016-pruning the apple trees and cleaning up the area. For more information on the Apple Orchard Project, please contact Connie Watson cwatson@baymills.org or 906.248.8363.

Photos

20: Pre project

28: clear cutting the area and exposing the apple trees

30: after apple tree exposed