

## Tribal Wildlife Grants Program

# Detecting the Presence of Fisher and Lynx in the Ceded Territory of the Coeur d'Alene Indian Tribe

### Project Summary

The proposed project is an intensive survey of the Ceded Territory of the Coeur d'Alene (CDA) Tribe to detect the presence of fisher (*Martes pennanti*) and lynx (*Lynx canadensis*), both of which are considered sensitive (lynx is Federally listed) in the northwest. Information on these forest carnivores is important because distributions of these species have decreased substantially in the past century. In addition, they are excellent indicators of the overall integrity of the ecosystem. This project would be a cooperative effort between the CDA Tribe, Idaho Department of Fish and Game (IDFG), Potlatch Corporation (Potlatch), and The United States Forest Service (USFS).

The fundamental goal of this study is to determine the presence or absence of fisher and lynx on the CDA Indian Reservation and Ceded Territories. This goal will be achieved by the following methods: 1) The study area will be analyzed to determine areas that contain suitable habitat for fisher and lynx; 2) An adaptive cluster method will be used to systematically sample the entire study area; 3) In each unit, 6 hair snare devices designed for fisher and 5 rubbing stations designed for lynx will be deployed; 4) After 2 weeks, the devices will be retrieved; 5) All hair samples will undergo DNA analysis to identify species and individuals; 6) If a positive detection takes place in a unit, each adjacent unit will then be surveyed. The study is expected to take 2 years to complete.

The benefits of the proposed project would be substantial, both from a regional and a tribal perspective. Firstly, the information from this study would be coupled with information from IDFG and USFS, and will benefit everyone involved by obtaining a better understanding of these forest carnivores in northern Idaho. Secondly, this information will be used as a baseline from which countless additional studies will arise. In addition, the CDA Tribe can utilize this information to make more informed recommendations regarding land-use practices in the Ceded Territory of the Tribe. The CDA Tribe will also use this information when making changes to their integrated resource management plan, forest management plan, and hunting and trapping regulations. In addition, this project will provide an opportunity for tribal members to gain experience and knowledge in the field of natural resource management. Finally, having the CDA Tribe in a leadership role in this type of coordinated effort outside of the Reservation will demonstrate the Tribe's ongoing interest in the overall environmental health in the entire aboriginal territory of the CDA Tribe.