

Using a Human-Centered Design Approach to Collaborate with the Wind River Reservation in central Wyoming for a more Disaster Resilient and Diverse Weather Ready Nation Initiative

Diversity Presentation

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ABSTRACT

The National Weather Service office in Riverton, Wyoming forged a successful partnership with the Wind River Reservation Tribal Engineers office and the University of Alabama's Center for Public Safety. The objective of the partnership is to improve future climate and disaster resiliency for the over 3,500 square mile area and population of 26,000 northern Arapahoe and eastern Shoshone residents on the Wind River Reservation in central Wyoming. Our team is rich in a variety of perspectives, experiences, expertise, and collaborative spirit, but even with the receipt of a Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) grant award, we are faced with challenges of working effectively and well with our target community, the residents of the Wind River Reservation. Coming from different socio-cultural backgrounds and as federal and state governments and educational institutions, our good intentions alone were not sufficient for enacting the grant project. Instead, we needed to think from the perspective of the community the grant proposal seeks to serve, and to do that, we need to learn to see from a new perspective and understand a worldview quite different from the ones we know. Placing the community at Wind River at the center of our efforts means letting the community educate us about their values and beliefs, as well as about their practical needs and expectations. We are adapting human centered design strategies to transform how we have come to work with the community from the perspective of the community. This presentation will further examine how we have successfully navigated the cultural waters and have been educated via the completion of focus group discussions with tribal residents to better understand and help provide opportunities for disaster resilience. The project will culminate with a Weather Ready Nation disaster resilience plan for the Wind River Reservation and the completion of a Climate Adaptation and Disaster Resilience workshop/summit for the inter-mountain and northern plains tribal organizations across the FEMA Region 8 area. The goal of the disaster resiliency plan will be to develop a model that will be utilized by around 20 tribal organizations across

the region.

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Requested presentation times: 30 to 45 minutes, the longer time is preferred if we're able to engage with the attendees throughout the presentation