

AIANEA East Regional Representative Nels Liljedahl Biography

My name is Nels Liljedahl and I am serving as the East Regional Representative for the American Indian/ Alaskan Native Employee Association.

I graduated from the University of Maine in 1981, receiving an A.S. degree in Forestry and a B.S. in Park and Recreation Management.

I have been employed with NRCS since 2002. I worked as a Soil Conservationist in Oxford County, Maine for one year and have been the District Conservationist in Carroll County, New Hampshire for 6 years.

For the 14 years prior to working for NRCS, I was the owner and operator of a landscaping /forestry/arborist business named Treescape Landscape Company.

My first career, which lasted for 8 years or more was very exciting, as a wilderness whitewater canoeing guide, which provided opportunities for me to travel to remote places in North America leading groups of people on river expeditions. I also worked as a cross country ski instructor, Christmas tree lot retail manager, sea urchin diver, and rafting guide.

Although I am not a Native American, I have always had a great appreciation for the culture, especially in terms of the sacred relationship with nature, and responsible sustainable stewardship of the land and waters. The somewhat nomadic life I led, living on wilderness rivers, has aided me in developing a sense of spirituality with the natural world.

I have been a member of the AI/AN EA since 2005, which is when I started my role as the SEPM. I have been fortunate to be able to attend every conference since 2005. Attending the conferences has been a very special time for me, especially the times I have been able to interact with some of the Elders, as well as seeing other members and getting to know them better over the years. I am now serving on the 2009 Conference Planning Committee and also on the Elder Involvement and Knowledge Sharing subcommittee of the Visioning Committee. I am continuing in my role as the SEPM AI/AN in New Hampshire for my fifth year, splitting the duties with a co SEPM.

I am involved in a number of community projects outside of work, including being a founding member and past board member of a local land trust.

My hobbies include paddling down rivers, bicycling, cross country and alpine skiing, badminton and archery, tending a small flock of sheep and having as much fun as I possibly can with my 12 year old son and 14 year old daughter.



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