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## Relationship of Bison, Native Plants and Native People to be Focus of May 17 Talk

SAN LUIS OBISPO -- James J. Garrett of the HoHwoJu band of the Lakota Native American tribe will present "The Northern Great Plains: Bison, Native Plants and Native People" 7 p.m., Wednesday, May 17, in Room 123 in the Agricultural Engineering Building at Cal Poly.

Garrett, a doctoral candidate in range management-sciences at Colorado State University in Fort Collins, will discuss the symbiotic relationships that connect Bison, native plants, and Native peoples – relationships, he says, that are represented and expressed through the context of the plains. A principal conclusion is that these three major ecosystem components shape each other over time.

Historically, Lakota and other Native Peoples of the plains relied principally upon hunting wild game and gathering roots, herbs and berries for food, medicines and other materials. "This physical connection is also a spiritual association expressed within the specific social context of the plains," Garrett said.

In his talk, Garrett will explore these connections and talk about how each of these system components has been diminished without the other. He will also identify the factors that contribute to change, and, most importantly, will take a look at what we know about Great Plains relationships today.

The lecture will explore these ideas through the voices of the Lakota people, the vital role Bison play in contemporary ecosystem management planning, and the guiding principles of ethnobotany -- the way people use plants as well as the way plants affect people's lives.

The free public talk is sponsored by Cal Poly's Ethnic Studies Department and College of Liberal Arts. For more information call 756-1707.

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