

Carly Bullock
Extern Summer 2025
Mount Pleasant Field Office
Mount Pleasant, Michigan

My name is Carly Bullock and I had the great opportunity to be an extern for Indian Health Service, Bemidji Area, Division of Environmental Health Services, Mount Pleasant Field Office. I am a current senior at Central Michigan University. I will be graduating in December 2025 with a Bachelor of Science in Environmental Health and Safety. I first heard about this opportunity through my academic advisor and a previous extern's experience. I knew it would be a great way to gain experience in the field of environmental health. My externship provided me an opportunity to apply my academic experience and gain hands-on experience working for Indian Health Service.

Throughout the summer, I worked in the Mount Pleasant Field Office. I had the opportunity to work with my preceptors Alan Bloch and William Bloomfield, becoming familiar with the obligations and work of being an Environmental Health Specialist. The six tribes that the office serves are the Match-E-Be-Nash-She-Wish Band of Potawatomi, Little River Band of Ottawa Indians, Nottawaseppi Huron Band of Potawatomi, Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe, Little Traverse Bay Band of Odawa Indians, and Pokagon Band of Potawatomi Indians. I gained experience in a variety of work settings by conducting food service sanitation surveys, inspecting RV Parks and campgrounds, conducting tick drags, pool and beach surveys, and zoonotic disease vectors (ticks and rabies). Additionally, I assisted with written inspection reports and led multiple food inspections at casinos.



A highlight of my work experience was collaborating with the Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe's Environmental Team. With this team, I was able to participate in activities such as turtle trapping and aquatic plant surveying. Additionally, the Mount Pleasant Field Office partnered with the local health department. It helped me better understand public health initiatives and broaden my experience in environmental health. A few activities that I was involved with at the Central Michigan District Health Department were restaurant food safety surveys, type II wells and water supplies, water sampling of local beaches for *E. coli.*, and wells and septic. These activities contributed to my direct experience with environmental health topics in my community.

For my summer externship project, I had the opportunity to focus on rabies prevention and response to the six federally recognized tribes covered by the Mount Pleasant Field Office. I contacted the health directors of each tribe and determined whether they had guidance documents, protocols, or contacts related to rabies. If there were no formal guidance documents or contacts currently existing, I collaborated with them to develop one and ensure proper contacts were available to respond to a rabies incident. I created an infographic that specified the definition of rabies, animals that can carry the disease, symptoms, what to do if bitten, and who

to contact for each tribe. My goal for this project was to support public health efforts towards rabies and zoonotic diseases.

In addition to the environmental health field, I had multiple cultural experiences worth noting. The first experience I had was attending a tribal community cultural teaching at the Sanilac Petroglyphs. Additionally, I visited the Ziibiwing Center, a museum and cultural center educating about the history of the Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe of Michigan.

Overall, I gained a significant amount of experience this summer externing with Indian Health Service. This externship has been enriching and delivered cultural insights, and practical skills for a career in environmental health. The skills I have learned about food safety and public health will carry on with me into my future career in environmental health. I would like to thank IHS for this amazing opportunity and wonderful experiences had this summer.

