



American Indian/Alaska Native Employees Association for NRCS

“Respect, Harmony, and Beauty”

**NATIONAL COUNCIL TELECONFERENCE
JANUARY 9, 2004**

President Ann Perales called meeting to order at 12:15 Eastern time.

A quorum was established and everyone introduced themselves. Present were Ann Whitebird-Perales, Crystal Leonetti, Glenn Lamberg, Felix Nez Jr, April Gansen, Pat Broyles, Ciro LoPinto, Larry Coburn, Harold Bryant, McKinley Posely, Herb Webb and Blythe Koyiyumptewa.

Herb Webb agreed to take the minutes in the absence of Tanya M.

Ann reported that the minutes had been sent out on the 16th and that Tanya made revisions based on those comments. The revised minutes were sent out on the 30th. No additional comments had been received. Pat made a motion to approve the corrected December’s teleconference minutes as sent out by Tanya on the 30th. Larry seconded the motion. The motion passed without opposition.

April read the treasurer’s report for the month ending January 8th and the year end report for 2003. April reported that she needs to sub total some of the categories on the report and will e-mail updated copies to everyone. Basically it was a good year for the association with increased memberships and a positive balance for the training conference. Reports to the Arizona Corporation Commission are due the end of April and the IRS reports are due May 15. April will prepare and send the reports.

Regional Reports

Midwest - Glenn reported that Michigan was adding two additional tribal contacts. These are collateral duties for an existing DC with 20% of their time dedicated to working with the tribe. He is working on developing a training outline for new tribal contacts. He asked for any help on doing these since this was his first attempt. Larry offered to review and provide some info based on what is used in the SE.

Southeast – Larry reported that he is currently working on a detail in another office and also has a new e-mail. His contact info is phone # 706-769-3990 and his new e-mail is larry.coburn@ga.usda.gov.

- Larry attended the Tribal SWCD meeting in Vegas last month and made a presentation on NRCS working with Tribes in Georgia and also included reports of activities of other Tribal liaisons in the SE.
- He is working as an advisor to INCA regarding Tribal SWCD’s in the SE region.
- He will be distributing copies of Jerry Thompson’s grant writing presentation to the Tribal liaisons in the SE.

South Central – Harold reported there will be a CSP listening session in Kerrville, TX on January 21.

- A meeting of the Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities on workforce development in March and that there were Tribal speakers on the agenda to discuss cultural ties between Native Americans and Hispanics.

- In February there will be a meeting of the Hispanic Farmers that will include some Tribal speakers on buffalo ranching.
- The display is scheduled to travel to Alaska next month.
- He is working with Indian Nations Conservation Alliance on developing a display for their use.

Northern Plains – Pat reported that he had sent e-mail messages to the current AI/ANEA Northern Plains members reminding them that their annual memberships were due. Pat also sent e-mail messages to all NRCS employees in the Northern Plains Region who had anything to do with working with American Indians inviting them to join the AI/ANEA. He sent information about the proposed locations for the 2005 conference to the national council.

East - Ciro reported that NY all employees conference had a visit from Bruce Knight. Ciro was able to present Bruce with one of the Native American Month posters.

- He has been asked to review the draft cultural resources agreement between NRCS and the Oneida Indian Nation.

West – Felix began by acknowledging and thanking several people (Blythe, Millie, McKinley, Harold, his CD board, AI/ANEA etc.) for their help and support for the recent Tribal SWCD meeting. At the meeting three new Tribal SWCD's were officially recognized as they participated in a signing ceremony with Annabelle Romero of USDA. He is currently writing up the listening session comments from Bruce Knight's Q&A session. He said there were many positive comments regarding our display at the meeting.

- SouthWest Indian Agriculture Association is having their conference Jan 27-29 at Laughlin.
- Navajo Nation RC&D has hired their first federal employee as a RC&D coordinator. Claudia Willetto was chosen for that position. Wallace Tsosie will remain in his current job and assist Claudia.

NHQ - McKinley reported that the National Tribal SWCD meeting was excellent. Bruce Knight is following up on the commitments that he made and has assigned Kari Cohen to work on the issues. The contact info is (301) 504-2218, or email kari.cohen@usda.gov.

- Native American Working Group is having a meeting on Global Disaster Assistance for March. Check out the website www.gdin.org
- GSA is having a AI/AN summit on government contracting. The goal is to strengthen AI/AN involvement in procuring gov't contracts. President Bush is on the agenda as a speaker.
- Annabelle Romero's office has been moved. She is no longer assigned to the Civil Rights division. Her office will now operate out of the InterGovernmental Affairs division.
- The USDA AI/AN Advisory council was impressed with this years poster and wants to support that effort again in 2004. They are willing to assist financially if they can get a commitment to have the posters completed by Oct. McKinley has already contacted the State Conservationist in Maine about this.
- He is working on getting the AI/AN policies into the general manual on NRCS's website.

Conference Planning – Ciro reported that he received an offer from the Oneida regarding their support of the conference. They would like to pay for embroidered bags to hand out with the registration supplies. The conference planning committee would like to hold another teleconference as soon as the members can all get together. Maybe as early as next week.

Ann asked who was the contact for getting more NRCS American Indian Heritage posters. Ciro said Laurie in their SO and her phone # is 315-477-6522.

Membership report – Presented by Ann. She visited with Yvette Dulle, membership coordinator. Our current membership stands at 112. This number includes lifetime members and current annual members.

Herb reported that:

-he sent out an e-mail with the ethics issues regarding outside organizations. He asked that everyone review that since AI/ANEA is an outside organization.

-he had prepared a letter and some questions for the membership. The letter was a year end report with a dues reminder and the information for the amendment to the constitution and bylaws. The questions were
1) in regards to the regional reorganization of NRCS and if our members felt we should make any changes,
2) in regards to future annual conferences
3) just a general request for what members wanted to see from the association.

- the webpage contract for 2004 had been drafted. It is for the calendar year 2004 and a maximum of \$700 for updates and maintenance. He anticipates that he will have a chance to review it with Matt in the next couple of weeks. Once signed he'll provide copies to Ann and Tanya for our records.

Brochures for Alaska - Crystal would like to distribute the AI/ANEA brochures at the upcoming "Working effectively with Alaska Natives Workshop". She asked for approval to print 100 copies for that purpose. She got an estimate of \$76 from a local printshop. Herb mentioned that was a better deal than we had gotten recently. The last printing was for 200 brochures and the cost was about \$300. A discussion ensued regarding getting additional copies and having Crystal mail those to folks who want. She was agreeable to do so, but wanted to get this order first to see the quality of the brochures. Pat made a motion to approve Crystal's request to print 100 copies of the brochure for \$76 and for the association to pick up the bill. Harold seconded the motion. The motion passed without opposition. April asked Crystal to let her know the details and she would get the payment taken care of.

Crystal has some extra posters if folks want some. McKinley also has several of the posters with one difference. Instead of NRCS they are from the USDA AI/AN Employee Advisory Council. Several folks spoke up for the posters.

The next teleconference will be Feb 13. Harold will host. Larry agreed to host the March 12th teleconference. Details to be sent out later.