



American Indian/Alaska Native Employees Association for NRCS

“Respect, Harmony, and Beauty”

**AMERICAN INDIAN / ALASKA NATIVE EMPLOYEES ASSOCIATION
FOR NRCS
NATIONAL COUNCIL TELECONFERENCE
May 14, 2004**

Those present: Ivan Dozier, Pat Broyles, Glenn Lamberg, Tanya Meyer-Dideriksen, Crystal Leonetti, Felix Nez, Larry Coburn, Ciro LoPinto, April Gansen, Noller Herbert (late).

Vice President, Ivan Dozier called the meeting to order at 11:05 am Central time.

Approval of Minutes

The minutes of the April 2004 National Council meeting were reviewed. Ivan Dozier moved to approve the minutes as amended and with a change that will be made by Tanya after the meeting. The change is to delete the line that reads “Southeast – Larry reported that”. Glenn Lamberg seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

Treasurer’s Report

April reviewed the Treasurer’s Report emailed to the National Council prior to the teleconference. April will reserve the rooms for the Elders today or tomorrow. She will also set up an account with UPS and FedEx. She reminded the Council that AIANEA is tax exempt and tax should not be paid on any purchases. Tanya will email the tax ID number to all National Council members.

Pat Broyles made a motion to approve the Treasurer’s Report. Crystal Leonetti seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

Regional Reports

West – Felix reported that there has been some planning in the state of Arizona to make the SEPM and AIANEA more visible. There was an Earth Day event on the Hopi reservation. Blythe, Felix, and the FWP Manager (Kristin Rockford) were part of the event and had a booth. There were 400 participants. Felix reported that he received the tattoos from April and they were a big hit with the kids.

Northern Plains – Pat reported on an ongoing issue with the Kickapoo Tribe in Kansas. They have water quantity issues related to a multi- year drought. NRCS designed a watershed structure, but they are running into regulation issues. BIA has stepped in to assist. They have had to transport water for an extended period of time.

Pat’s powerpoint presentation for the Plant Material Center has stirred a lot of interest. He is planning on planting a Three Sisters Garden at the Plant Material Center to use as an educational tool for visitors. He will share photos of the garden and a possible brochure. He has been working with the Oklahoma tribes to provide squash and sweetgrass.

Midwest – Glenn reported that National Native News (native NPR equivalent) reported on the cultural resources protection agreement signed in April in Michigan. Glenn developed an SEPM brochure and it is available to share. He has been working with the Tribal Liaisons in Wisconsin to develop gardening brochures. Tom Cogger is the main contact besides Glenn. The brochures should be available in the summer.

A USDA conference for tribes in Michigan that was scheduled for May 21 and 22 has been rescheduled to October. The purpose of the session is to bring tribal governments and staffs in contact with all USDA programs that are available to them. Other partners include IAC, the MI USDA State Outreach and Michigan State University Extension.

Ivan reported that in Illinois, FSA has prepared a policy regarding taking over the cultural resources and consultation on CRP. The process is that NRCS documents cultural resources affects on the CPA-52 and provides it to FSA to proceed. In Michigan, FSA is becoming more active with cultural resources.

Glenn will send his SEPM brochure to Crystal. Tanya has also developed an SEPM brochure for Iowa and will send to Glenn and Crystal.

Southeast – Larry reported that he is working with the SE RC&D Association on their annual meeting in Savannah, GA Sept. 20-25, 2004. All American Indian Liaisons and tribal representatives are invited. One of the priority focuses will be tribal success stories. The SE Region American Indian Program Delivery Initiative is scheduled for Oct. 4-8, 2004 and will be hosted by Poarch Creek, a federally recognized tribe in Alabama. A strong showing of liaisons and tribal representatives is anticipated.

The SE American Indian Work Group will continue operating after NRCS reorganization. They are still determining details.

East and 2004 Training Conference – Ciro reported that the Planning Committee had a teleconference on May 12, mostly to update the committee on Ciro's April 28 visit to Turning Stone. His site visit was to plan the field trip day and to iron out details with the conference planning. He will meet onsite again in June to finalize everything.

During the April teleconference, the National Council asked if Turning Stone could continue the reduced lodging rate of \$70 for Friday night, July 16. The hotel is unable to do this, but will provide a room to lock up items and all transportation to Miracle Isle. They will also arrange for FedEx to pick up our items at Turning Stone.

During the April teleconference, there was discussion about having a cash bar for events during the conference. Turning Stone is able to provide a cash bar. There is no cost if the alcohol purchases are over \$300. If under \$300, the cost to AIANEA is \$50 for the bartender. The National Council decided that a cash bar will be available on Wednesday, July 14 for the Traditional Dinner/Banquet and on Tuesday, July 13 during the social hour.

Ciro reported that the National Civil Rights Committee requested to have a meeting room booked. Ciro has booked the room for their meetings. The NCRC will pay for their meeting room and will pay for breaks for anyone in their group that does not register for our conference. It is expected that most of the NCRC will register for our conference and attend portions of it while they also have their meetings. The NCRC will invite all state Civil Rights Committee Chairpersons. Rosendo Trevino and Noller Herbert are working on this.

Charlene, from Turning Stone, will send a mock up of the room set up to Ciro. Ciro will forward it to the National Council. The style will likely be classroom. Regarding the poster session, there can be no wall attachment of posters. We need to know the number of tables needed. Ciro will determine

the amount of foam board existing from 2003. Matt will edit the website to show the size parameters for posters per the size of the foam board. The poster session, silent auction and all general sessions will be in the same room.

Ciro has spoken with Heather Porter of the Oneida Nation about gifts for Elders. She will provide ideas of possible local Oneida crafts that could be used. The tribe will provide buses for the field trips at no charge. Giro has requested 3 buses (probably school buses) for the 3 field trip sites.

AV equipment – The cultural resources person from NY is helping to locate NRCS equipment to use so as not to rent much. It has been determined that we need 5 set-ups for powerpoint presentations and overheads. There will be 2 slide projectors available. The cultural resources staff and Civil Rights Committee will bring their own. AIANEA needs to locate 3 set-ups.

Ciro is working on getting a van from NRCS in NY to have available for dignitaries, Elders etc. to be able to pick them up at the airport, provide separate tours if necessary etc. Speaker agreements are in progress. Work is still being done to confirm some speakers.

Tour – the tours are half days. Giro toured the golf course while on site visit. If included as a tour site, we cannot walk onto golf course. There are some wetlands and natural habitat that can be seen from the road. That would be the extent of the tour. The clubhouse is very close to Turning Stone and has an observation deck. It is possible to discuss the course with the golf course manager. Giro is proposing that the golf course be an optional tour that individuals could take on their own time if desired.

The 3 sites that Giro is proposing for the official tours are:

1. Oneida Cultural Center
2. Oneida Farm
3. Great Swamp Conservancy – this is an area that focuses on WRP and currently has 52 participants. There is a 900 foot boardwalk. They are working on a permanent display of artifacts found in the area. They work closely with the Oneida Tribe.

It is proposed that at registration time, those with NRCS cell phones provide the phone numbers. Noller confirmed the NCRC participation. Constance Miller resigned from the planning committee. The next planning committee teleconference is June 30 at 11:30 Eastern time.

NHQ Update

Noller has been in his new position for 2 weeks. His voice mail is not yet working. Email is the best form of communication right now. He is reviewing the GM Title 410 Part 405 to be posted on the website soon. Regional and National Tribal Conservation Advisory Councils do not exist and is something to strive for in the future.

Tribal activities need to be published. Send any stories to Noller. Follow your state procedures. The stories will be published in NRCS This Week. Noller asked the Council to keep in communication with him regarding any issues and communication distributed to Headquarters.

Miscellaneous

Pat offered 2 items for the Business Meeting to be held during the conference in NY:

1. Location of the 2005 conference (SD or MT)
2. Reorganization of NRCS – should AIANEA regions be changed

Noller reported that if there are any meetings happening in the regions with tribes, Annabelle Romero should be invited. She has voiced interest in this so that she can meet with tribes. Any USDA issues with tribes should be presented to Annabelle directly from the tribe.

Felix asked Noller for the structure of USDA/NRCS in Washington DC. Noller explained that he is included in the Resource Conservation Development and Rural Lands Division (RC&D a part of this). Charles Whitmore is the Associate Deputy Chief over this Division. Carole Jett is also an Associate Deputy Chief. Jose Ascevedo is the Deputy Chief, directly under Bruce Knight, Chief.

Noller went on to explain that Annabelle Romero is a political appointee and reports directly to the Under Secretary Deputy, who reports to the Secretary. Annabelle works with all USDA agencies (12).

The Native American Working Group meets twice per month to report to Annabelle so she can report to the Secretary. She filters issues down, for example, any NRCS issues go to Noller.

Noller reported that APHIS wants to know more about the Harmony training. They would like to have a session for their employees.

Next Teleconference

The next teleconference will take place on June 11, 2004 at 11:00 Central Time. **Tanya Meyer-Dideriksen agreed to coordinate the teleconference. *The June teleconference was rescheduled to June 18 due to the closing of federal offices on June 11 in observance of the death of former President Ronald Reagan.***

Adjourn

Glenn Lamberg made a motion to adjourn the teleconference. Felix Nez seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously. The teleconference adjourned at 12:35 CST.

Respectfully Submitted by
Tanya Meyer-Dideriksen, Secretary