



American Indian/Alaska Native Employees Association for NRCS

“Respect, Harmony, and Beauty”

**AMERICAN INDIAN / ALASKA NATIVE EMPLOYEES ASSOCIATION
FOR NRCS
NATIONAL COUNCIL TELECONFERENCE
May 19, 2006**

Those present: Crystal Leonetti, David Elliott, Pat Broyles, Pat Green, Millie Titla, Felix Nez, Tanya Meyer-Dideriksen, Carol Crouch, Buster Landin, and Ivan Dozier .

President, Crystal Leonetti called the meeting to order at 11:36 am CST. She welcomed all and conducted the roll call. **Action items are noted in red. Motions are in blue.**

Approval of Minutes

The April minutes were reviewed and revised prior by Council members.

MOTION 05192006-1: Motion was made to accept the minutes of the April meeting

Motion made by: Pat Broyles

Motion seconded: Fleix Nez

Motion passed: Unanimously

Treasurer’s Report

Tanya reviewed the Treasurer’s Report that was emailed prior to the teleconference. She reported that she has received 6 registrations for the 2006 conference. She reported that she had mailed 50% of Cathee Wilson’s registration fee to APIO. In addition, she explained the agreement between AIANEA and the APIO on registrations received that were neither AIANEA or APIO members or members of both; both parties agreed to split those registrations received that were not either AIANEA or APIO members and the transfer, 50% registration fee, between the two organizations every two weeks. She reported that the money market account is doing well and bank statements are now being delivered.

MOTION 05192006-2: Motion was made to accept the Treasurer’s Report.

Motion made by: Pat Broyles

Motion seconded: Buster Landin

Motion passed: Unanimously

Region Reports

Southeast Region – Pat Green reported the following;

1. As most of you are aware, in the Southeast Region, we have a regional American Indian Work Group. SEPM's and Tribal Liaisons all meet together monthly via teleconference in promoting the quality of life and addressing issues concerning American Indians in our part of the country. We now have a new Work Group Advisor, Gary Kobylski, Alabama State Conservationist. He replaces Homer Watkins, State conservationist, Mississippi.
2. S.E. Region Work Group is in the process of kicking around the possibility of putting on another American Indian Program Delivery initiative meeting. Exploring the ideal of meeting with USET (United south east tribes) at their annual meeting in South Carolina or Florida. The last meeting was held in Alabama on the Porch Band of creek Indians tribal land and was very successful and beneficial.
3. In Florida, the Seminole Tribe has new tribal leadership and the NRCS Tribal Liaison, Roel Herrera has been making the effort personally meeting one-on-one to explain what is available through NRCS programs.
4. In, Georgia, SEPM, Debbie Henry is working with the Cherokee using RC&D Grant monies to construct an Environmental outdoor Classroom, nature boardwalk, and a new council roadhouse on Tribal grounds.
5. Received two applications from American Indian students for NRCS student Trainee Program.

Northern Plains Region – Pat Broyles reported that he had sent the required data to his State Office to have a state bulletin made for the training session in August. They did make one, but the last one said that workload and budget would be major considerations on who would be able to go.

East Region – Ciro LoPinto reported the following;

1. Myself and the APIO SEPM were both approved for travel to anchorage
2. Cultural Resources Specialist and I met with Seneca Nation and their Tribal Historic Preservation Officer to discuss cultural resources issues on their upcoming EQIP sites. All sites are forested and all contain cultural resources. Resources include significant plants, burial sites and village sites. Some sites will have a full time monitor during construction other sites there will be an effort made to transplant woody plants. CR Specialist offered the opportunity for a more formal agreement regarding CR. The Seneca presently declined and asked to leave it informal. I told those present about our Association, my EEO/CR/SEPM responsibilities, the Tribal Scholars Program and the course that NY is planning, Consultation with American Indian Governments. The Seneca offered us a speaker for the course. Our CR Specialist will write a report on what we all agreed upon and who will pay for it.
3. Went to the Haudenosaunee GPS Symposium on the Mohawk Reservation. The three day session was hosted by the Haudenosaunee Environmental Task Force with EPA Grant money. I made a lot of good contacts with other Nations of the Haudenosaunee and have followed up on some of these. Also got some good ideas for speakers at upcoming AIANEA conferences.
4. Still no news on scheduling of "Consultation with American Indian Governments" NEDC course. I will probably wait and speak to Clyde when in AK. My HR person wants me to keep my nose out of it, I will, for now.

West Region

Five NRCS employees were approved to attend the AIANEA/APIO training conference in Alaska. They are;

1. David McKay – Arizona STC
2. Richard Strait – AZ APIO SEPM
3. Blythe Koyiyumptewa – AZ AIAN SEPM
4. Ivan Joe – Assistant AZ AIAN SEPM
5. Leonard Notah – NRCS DC for Hopi Tribe

I hope everyone has taken the time to read the two proposals submitted to AIANEA for the 2007 Conference in Arizona. There are two (2) proposals sent to the AIANEA National Council. The proposals are from the:

- Sheraton Wildhorse Pass Resort, owned by the Gila River Indian Tribe. The hotel is located about 15 minutes from PHX Airport. The hotel and meeting rooms is connected, the casino is located about 5-10 minute walk from the hotel and meeting rooms. Also attached to the email is the web site, which shows all the amenities and surrounding golf course and other attractions. The hotel is about 500 rooms is the resort is about 2-3 years old. The meeting rooms seem adequate for our 2007 training.
- The Raddison at Fort Mcdowell is owned by the Fort Mcdowell Yavapai Tribe, and is located about 25 minutes NE of PHX Airport. The hotel/resort has about 245 rooms and opened in December 2005. The hotel and conference center are connected, and the casino is located about 5-10 minute walk from the resort. Again, the NC should have received the website and proposal from the hotel.

Midwest Region – Buster Landin reported he has been working on AIANEA membership letter. Helped setting up reception and ceremony for Pokagon Band of Potawatomi WRP project. Tanya Meyer-Dideriksen reported that Iowa hired 18 interns and two of those interns were American Indian students.

South Central Region – In behalf of Leota Burnett, Carol Crouch reported the following;

1. All Tribal leaders of all Oklahoma tribes, their environmental departments, land management departments, offices of environmental health, tribal enterprise, construction and roads departments are being invited to attend Southern Regional Cooperative Soil Survey Conference being held June 12-15, 2006 in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. The theme of the conference is "Reconnecting and Enhancing the National Cooperative Soil Survey Partnership".
2. Oklahoma Tribal Conservation Advisory Council (OTCAC) held their annual meeting in Shawnee, Oklahoma on April 14, 2006 at 10:00.

NHQ/Tribal Liaison – Crystal reported that she had tried to reach Edith Morigeau, NRCS National Tribal Liaison, and had not been able to contact her. **Crystal will continue to try and contact Edith to inform her of AIANEA, invite her to the training conference, and invite her to attend our June teleconferences.**

Speaker request for National Hispanic Meeting (NOPHNRCSE)

Crystal had been asked to speak at the 2006 National Hispanic Meeting being held July 24 through the 27th, however, due to her schedule she will not be able to speak. Crystal asked David Elliott to replace her as the speaker at the conference, however, David Elliott was unable to secure travel approval and unable to attend. It was suggest that Florida NRCS Tribal Liaison, Roel Herrera, be contacted to speak at the conference. Crystal will proceed to contact NRCS Tribal Liaison, Roel Herrera to see if he is available to speak at the NOPHNRCSE conference in July.

Membership Drive

Buster Landin has been working with Johnny McCoy on the membership letter. **Buster and Crystal will continue to work with Johnny McCoy on the membership letter and get it ready for final review.**

2008 Conference & Future Proposed Conference Locations Proposal

Crystal reminded the council that a location for the 2008 conference will need to be determined at the 2006 conference. Discussion took place regarding the questionnaire that Herb and Buster developed to poll member interest in various scenarios for the 2008 conference. The following actions will be required:

1. The proposed questionnaire will be edited, changes made and comments will be made to the questionnaire by Herb Webb.
2. Crystal will take on the responsibility of getting the final questionnaire posted to the AIANEA web site.
3. All regional representatives will email the proposal/questionnaire to their contact list
4. Carol Crouch will do a mailing the proposal/questionnaire to all AIANEA members.

MOTION 05192006-3: Motion was made to do a mailing the proposal/questionnaire to all AIANEA members, post to the website, and representatives will email the proposal/questionnaire to their contacts by May 30, 2006.

Motion made by: Buster Landin

Motion seconded: David Elliott

Motion passed: Unanimously

USDA Recognition

Tanya discussed the USDA recognition material that was forwarded to the National Council for review. Crystal had the opportunity to visit with Bea Herbert, located in Washington, D.C. Mrs. Herbert advised and encouraged AIANEA to go through the recognition process as soon as possible. Some the advantages and opportunities of having USDA recognition include;

1. Reasonable use of agency equipment (phone, teleconference sources, copiers, and etc.) and administrative support services for employees to prepare professional papers in conjunction with their role in a professional association where there is benefit to the agency.
2. Travel payment, per diem, tuition and official time to attend professional association meetings where the agency will benefit.
3. Authorization of excused absence for employees willing to pay their own way to attend professional association meetings when the agency will benefit.
4. Use of USDA space for meetings; as available.
5. Use of bulletin boards and other areas of display, USDA internal mail system and electronic mail to notify its members about meetings and activities, provided the activity does not interfere with conducting official business. USDA-recognized associations and employee organizations are not authorized to use agency-developed and controlled all-employee mailing lists to send broadcast messages.

The procedures involve; providing a copy of AIAEA by-laws, completing a form, and typing up the AIANEA declaration. The timeline for the process is approximately 2 weeks. **Tanya agreed to assist Crystal with the filing process by typing up the AIANEA Declaration and forwarding to Crystal ASAP.**

MOTION 05192006-4: Motion was made that President of AIANEA, Crystal Leonetti, proceed with USDA recognition process.

Motion made by: Pat Broyles

Motion seconded: Buster Landin

Motion passed: Unanimously

2006 Conference

Crystal reported that she had received six boxes of the conference bags and that the "I" had been left off the "little" logo under the APIO logo. The AIANEA planning members are okay with accepting the bags as they are and is awaiting a decision from the APIO group to determine if we are going to

request that the bags be re-done, accept the bags, or ask for a discount. **Crystal will continue to communicate with APIO and provide an update of their decision at the next meeting.**

Crystal had talked to Dick Gooby about a Seven Generations presentation at the 2006 conference. In addition, Dick Gooby has requested 5 minutes on the agenda.

Carol Crouch reported that Michelle Morningstar, IBM, has requested a letter of attendance for the conference. Michelle Morningstar offered to speak, present, and/or be a panelist where ever the AIANEA may need her assistance. **Crystal will get a letter out to Michelle Morningstar and follow-up on her request.**

Crystal reported that the AIANEA websites has been re-organized. An email went out inviting AIANEA and APIO members to submit posters. Prior to the teleconference, Leota came on to say that she and Angela Biggs (APIO) determined that there will be a joint live auction and joint silent auction at the conference.

Conference 2007

Felix and Millie provided the following updates regarding the 2007 conference:

1. The Arizona Members of the National Organization of Professional Hispanic Natural Resources Conservation Service Employees (NOPHNRCSE) has proposed that we partner with them for the 2007 conference, and would like to present this proposal to their Membership and National Council at the NOPHNRCSE Conference in July.
2. The SAIGE council has requested to partner with us for the 2007 conference
3. Sara Braasch, NRCS West Regional Assistant Chief's Assistant contacted the STC in Arizona regarding holding our conference in partnership with other employee organizations and also the National Leadership Team in 2007.

Felix and Millie will work together to make sure the hotel can accommodate all three organizations and determine the dates available. Millie will contact all three interested parties and advised them that AIANEA is very interested in sharing conference dates and locations and further investigation is being conducted and will be discussed at the June meeting.

AIANEA By-Law Changes and Historian Position

The AIANEA By-Law Changes were sent out for a two (2) week review. Millie discussed clarification of the Historian position. The Association Historian will be a non-voting member (honorary) of the National Council and will serve the same term as the Secretary and Treasurer. No changes were recommended to be made to the AIANEA By-Law Changes and it was recommended to accept the Historian position as defined in the amendment. In addition, it was recommended that the AIANEA By-Law changes and amendments be mailed to AIANEA members. **Millie will develop the necessary Constitution amendment as a separate update and will submit to the Constitution and Bylaws Committee, however, the position can be established and accepted without approval from the Constitution and Bylaws Committee.**

MOTION 05192006-4: Motion was made that the AIANEA By-Law Changes and the Historian position be approval as outlined in the amendments and the AIANEA Secretary, Carol Crouch, complete a mailing to all members by May 30, 2006.

Motion made by: Felix Nez
Motion seconded: Crystal Leonetti
Motion passed: Unanimously

Other Business

Martin Bales has not been approved to attend the 2006 conference and need some direction on how the handle getting the "staff" to the 2006 conference. **Crystal will ask Ann Perales to contact and work Martin Bales and follow up with him and with the "drum keeper" and regarding the transport of both items.**

Adjourn and Next Meeting

The next meeting is on June 9 at 8:30 am Alaska time. Same call in number.

MOTION 05192006-6: Motion was made that the May AIANEA meeting be adjourned.

Motion made by: David Elliott

Motion seconded: Felix Nez

Motion passed: Unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted by
Carol Vallee Crouch, Secretary