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**American Indian/Alaska Native Employees Association for NRCS**  
***“Respect, Harmony, and Beauty”***

**NATIONAL COUNCIL TELECONFERENCE MINUTES**  
**November 13, 2006**

**Those present:** Steve Myers, Crystal Leonetti, Tanya Meyer-Dideriksen, Buster Landin, Leota Burnett, Ciro LoPinto, Millie Titla, David Elliot and Carol Crouch.

**Not Present:** Pat Green, Herb Webb and Felix Nez

**Welcome and Roll Call**

President, Crystal Leonetti and called the meeting to order at 11:43 am CST. She welcomed all and conducted the roll call. Roll Call: Ciro, Leota, Buster, Steve, Tanya, Millie, David, and Carol.

**Action items are noted in red. Motions are in blue.**

**Approval of Minutes**

The October 13, 2006, minutes were reviewed and approved with amendments by Council members.

**MOTION 11132006-1:**

Motion was made to accept the minutes of the October 13, 2006 meeting minutes.

Motion made by: David Elliott  
Motion seconded: Leota Burnett  
Motion passed: Unanimously

**MOTION 11132006-2:**

Friendly amendment to the motion to accept the minutes of the October 13, 2006 meeting minutes with the removal of the following sentence; A motion was made to remove “all members may vote for Regional Reps” in the Bylaws, Article 10 Elections, Item F.

Motion made by: David Elliott  
Motion seconded: Leota Burnett  
Motion passed: Unanimously

**Treasurer’s Report**

Tanya reviewed the Treasurer’s Report that was emailed prior to the teleconference. Tanya updated the National Council members on the ending financial report from the 2006 conference and reported that the income and expenses are finalized as far as AIANEA is concerned and she is waiting for a final concurrent from the APIO.

**MOTION 11132006-3:**

Motion was made to accept the November Treasurer’s report as presented and reviewed during the teleconference on November 13, 2006.

Motion made by: David Elliott  
Motion seconded: Steve Myers  
Motion passed: Unanimously

**Region Reports**

**Southeast Region** – Pat Green not reporting.

**Northern Plains Region** – Steve Myers reported the following:  
**Accomplishments in Kansas**

- Kansas is planning to participate in the fall career fair at Haskell Indian Nations University.

**Accomplishments on the Turtle Mountain Reservation, North Dakota**

- We are in the third year of a biological control program to assist in controlling leafy spurge on the Turtle Mountain Reservation.
- We are working in cooperation with the Rolette County Extension agent and the Turtle Mountain Community College to conduct a range management workshop every other year.
- The USDA conducts a problem solving group meeting three times a year. The objective of the meeting is to identify and seek removal of barriers to program delivery through communication between USDA agencies, and recommend program changes to fit unique situations found on reservations, and to share information and resources. The group members include: BIA Turtle Mountain Agency, Turtle Mountain Tribal Council, Tribal Directors, FSA staff, NRCS staff, North Dakota Forest Service, Rolette County Soil Conservation District, Cooperative Extension Service, FSA Farm Loan Program staff, Turtle Mountain Community College, and Turtle Mountain Community School.
- The NRCS has been conducting a range inventory on tribal trust lands, and tribal allotted lands for the Turtle Mountain Reservation. This inventory has been ongoing with the Turtle Mountain Tribe and Native American producers.
- The NRCS works directly with the Turtle Mountain Community College on an annual basis to provide information to students interested in summer employment, or an NRCS career.
- The NRCS has a booth at the annual career fair held at the Turtle Mountain Community College.
- Every other year the NRCS and the Cooperative Extension Service hosts a noxious weed workshop for local producers.
- The NRCS continued to conduct a range inventory on Native American lands through the summer season.
- The NRCS continues to provide the Turtle Mountain Tribe, and its members, technical assistance to apply conservation practices.

**Accomplishments in Wyoming**

- The following is a brief overview of NRCS activities on the Wind River Indian Reservation in central Wyoming. The Reservation is home to the Eastern Shoshone Tribe and the Northern Arapahoe Tribe.
- Obligated approximately \$500,000 in EQIP across the reservation, including Tribal members and non-Tribal members. We have Obligated from \$400,000-\$500,000 yearly for the past several years, with Tribal members receiving approximately half of those funds and contracts. All contracts are irrigation system improvements.
- Have 2 active CSP contracts on approximately 400,000 acres
- Have 4 active WRP contracts with the Joint Tribes. Target is to write 2 WRP contracts annually and implement 2 WRP projects annually on the reservation. Have completed 5 contracts with the Tribes as sponsors. All projects are restoration only
- Have one active AMA irrigation infrastructure contract with Tribal members on Tribal land.
- Working on the development of a Tribal Conservation District
- Held a center pivot irrigation workshop for Tribal members
- Are completing a reservation wide soil survey of approximately 2.3 million acres
- Are completing a range inventory of approximately 1.5 million acres on Tribal lands.
- NRCS operates the SNOTEL sites on the reservation and shares data with the Tribes as requested.
- In past years have completed WHIP, AMA, EWP and RAMP projects.

**East Region** – Ciro LoPinto not reporting.

**West Region** – Felix Nez report the following:

- Arizona has just added one more American Indian Female to its workforce. This new hire increases American Indian Females to four (4).
- I emailed out 35 West Region AIANEA "paid" members. Some members requested a bio from Mr. Wise, which I requested and the David Wise "Bio" was emailed by Crystal Leonetti. Several AIANEA members have not met Mr. David Wise, so it might a good idea to ask all future candidates for short biographies.
- Millie Titla will be forming a new "Indian Outreach" team to explore ways to implement outreach in Arizona and other surrounding states.
- Area 2, all Northern Arizona NRCS Field Offices participated in one the first "NRCS Area Meetings" on the Navajo Reservation in Chinle, Az. Area 2 toured surrounding EQIP Projects, and this meeting was hosted by the Chinle Field Office.

The "Halwood" family hosted an evening Barbeque in Canyon De Chelly. This meeting and barbeque gave an opportunity for other non-reservation Field Offices to culturally experience the uniqueness of Navajo Land. There were also presentations by Navajo EQIP cooperators and locally led Navajo conservation partnerships. Our next Area 2 meeting will be held in Fredonia, AZ, which is North and West of Page, AZ, about 20 miles south Utah.

- The Hopi Tribe was allowed to have its own allocation area, as is the case of the Navajo Nation. This allows both tribes to develop it "ranking points" and cost rates for conservation practices for their separate "allocation" areas.
- Leonard Notah attended the AISES recruitment conference in Detroit.

**Midwest Region** – Buster Landin submitted the following report:

- Attended AISES annual conference, recruited students, presented at concurrent sessions
- Received Louie Dick's Sequoyah Fellows AISES lifetime membership medal.
- Hosted NRCS state office employees American Indian History month luncheon.
- Gave quiz / presentation on important American Indian facts to all Indiana NRCS employees. The people who did the best get a spot award. I sent this "quiz" to all SEPMs across the country. Distributed Indiana's SCEP announcement to interested parties.
- Contacted Minnesota State Conservationist Bill Hunt and Dave Wise MN tribal liaison about Aurelia DeNasha NAISEF grand award winner from Fond du Lac, MN.

**South Central Region** – Leota Burnett and Carol Crouch reported the following:

- Emailing articles and interesting facts out for American Indian/Alaska Native Heritage Month
- I spoke with Norman Lopez about maps and other information needed regarding his tribe. I emailed Roylene with information provided by Norman.
- Emailed Vice President and Regional Representative nominees' election information to South Central members of the AIANEA.
- Choctaw Nation will host a High School career fair on Tuesday, November 14, 2006, from 9:00 to 12:00. All Indian schools and area schools were invited. USDA outreach representative, from Washington, DC, will attend.
- Carol Crouch and Buster Landin accepted Louie Dick's AISES Sequoyah Fellowship medal at the AISES conference.
- Carol Crouch and Roylene Rides at the Door attend the GRC meeting at the AISES annual conference on November 3, 2006. NRCS has set the bar for other federal agencies.
- NRCS Tribal Liaison, Melanie Oliver will be attending the Agriculture Conference in Vegas. Melanie will be assisting The Oklahoma Tribal Conservation Advisory Council booth and poster presentation.
- Carol Crouch reported that the NRCS recruiting cadre at the American Indian Science and Engineering Society (AISES) had a successful recruiting conference for NRCS. The 28<sup>th</sup> annual Conference was held in Detroit Michigan, November 1 through the 4<sup>th</sup>. State Conservationist for Michigan, Jack Bricker, attended the recruitment conference; he received the NRCS award at the Gemstone reception, participated in the NRCS Concurrent session and attended the Honor Banquet on Saturday. Recruiting cadre members include: Carol Crouch, Oklahoma; Noller Herbert, DC; Roylene Rides at the Door, RI; Nathaniel Todea, Utah; Jerry Rouse, Washington; David Elliott, Alabama; Leonard Notah, Arizona; Buster Landin, Indiana; Tricia Mootz, Iowa; Rose Webb, Arkansas; and replacing cadre members Herb Webb and Crystal Leonetti, that were unable to attend; were Michigan employees; Dan Wing, Fred Gasper, Frank Cousin and helping with the interview booth was Jessica Modert, HR specialist from Michigan. The Recruiting Cadre documented meaningful contacts (sign-ins, resumes & interviews) with 65 students and collected 24 resumes with 18 interviews.

**(Photos below)**



#### NHQ/Tribal Liaison- Edith Morigeau

Edith Morigeau, NRCS National Tribal Liaison, was not able to join the teleconference.

**Action item: Crystal will follow up with Edith and extend an invitation for her to join our teleconference next month.**

#### Setting up Bank Accounts for NRCS Employees

Tanya reported that NRCS employees can set up a bank account for NRCS employees and /or AIANEA members to make a contribution from their pay check to AIANEA scholarship fund. The funds donated through this account can be used for scholarships. Tanya will be meeting with Tricia Mootz, Human Resources Specialist in Iowa, to discuss the details on how to set up the steps for NRCS employees and AIANEA members to make a contribution to the scholarship fund and/or membership fees.

#### MOTION 11132006-4:

Motion was made for AIANEA Treasurer to move forward in setting up a banking account for NRCS employees and AIANEA members to make a contribution to the scholarship and/or membership fees.

Motion made by: Buster Landin

Motion seconded: Steve Myers

Motion passed: Unanimously

#### AISES GRC Meeting Report:

Noller Herbert not on the teleconference; however GRC report is attached to minutes for review.

**( See attachment A)**

#### 2007 Conference Update

Felix was not on the conference call.

**Action Item: Crystal will set up a teleconference call with David, Millie, and Felix to discuss the 2007 conference and report out to the National Council during the December teleconference.**

#### 2008 Conference

Crystal Leonetti reported that the planning and local proposal with SAIGE for the 2008 conference update will be pending a teleconference that has been tentatively set for November 17, 2006.

**Action Item: Crystal will up date the National Council on the 2008 conference during the December teleconference.**

#### Standing Committee Chairs

David Elliott reported that he will be sending out a reminder for AIANEA members to respond to David's request to AIANEA members to serve as chairs for the AIANEA standing committees.

## Bylaws

Crystal opened discussion on clarification of who would be allowed to vote on the AIANEA elections. It was pointed out that bylaws were not clear; Crystal read Article 10 Elections, Item F. The following motion was made for further approval.

### MOTION 11132006-5:

Motion to amendment to the bylaws as outline in Article 10, Item F as follows; *Anyone with current Charter, Regular, Life, or Institutional membership in the Association shall be eligible to vote in any election of Officers and/or for the Regional Representatives in their region.*

Motion made by: Leota

Motion seconded: Steve Myers

Motion passed: Unanimously

**Action Item: Proposed motion will be forwarded by Secretary, Carol Crouch, to 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President, Millie Titla, for the Constitution and Bylaw committee to review and approved prior to posting on the AIANEA web page for membership review.**

## Other Business

Ciro LoPinto reported that the planning group for the Visioning Committee has not met. Discussion on moving forward to schedule a planning meeting was opened by Ciro. Ciro recommended that a teleconference be scheduled for the visioning committee and that the members of the Visioning Committee elect a chair for the visioning committee.

**Action Item: Ciro will get a teleconference scheduled for the Visioning Committee.**

## Review of Action Items

**Done**

## Adjourn and Next Meeting

The next meeting is on December 11, 2006. Same call in number.

### MOTION 11132006:

Motion was made that the November AIANEA meeting be adjourned.

Motion made by: Buster

Motion seconded: David

Motion passed: Unanimously.

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Respectfully Submitted by Carol Vallee Crouch, Secretary