



American Indian/Alaska Native Employees Association for NRCS

"Respect, Harmony, and Beauty"

AMERICAN INDIAN / ALASKA NATIVE EMPLOYEES ASSOCIATION FOR NRCS NATIONAL COUNCIL TELECONFERENCE July 13, 2007

Welcome: David Elliott, AIANEA, President,

Those present: David Elliott, Carol Crouch, Tanya Meyer-Dideriksen, Crystal Leonetti, Pat Green, Felix Nez, Levi Montoya, and Millie Titla

Not Present: Edith Morigeau, Buster Landin and Ciro LoPinto

President, David Elliott called the meeting to order at approximately **11:50 am CST.**

Approval of Minutes

The June minutes were reviewed and approved by the National Council members.

MOTION 07132007-1: Motion was made to accept the minutes of the June 2007 meeting.

Motion made by: Millie Titla
Motion seconded: Leota Burnett
Motion passed: Unanimously

Treasurer's Report

Tanya reviewed the Treasurer's Report for June. Tanya reported that we have received membership dues, exhibitor's fees and conference registrations that are reflected in the report. One final bill came in from the 2006 Annual conference and it has been paid for the tent used during the tour.

MOTION 07132007-2: Motion was made to accept the AIANEA June Treasurer's Report for the July 13, 2007 AIANEA monthly conference is approved as presented.

Motion made by: Levi Montoya
Motion seconded: Pat Green
Motion passed: Unanimously

Region Reports

East Region – Ciro LoPinto reported the following;

- Still working with Cornell's American Indian Program, specifically their Trans-boundary Indigenous Water program. Helped to review a grant request collaborating with Cayuga Nation.
- NY still trying to hold the consultation class FY08, we have enough people to fill the class
- National Envirothon being held in NY. Requested a Native person address the group and take part in opening ceremonies.
- NY NRCS is cooperating with NYNASS regarding American Indian farmers. Will be meeting with National Tribal Liaison for NASS this week.
- Sent out blanket e-mail to all east SEPMS

Vermont:

- In May of 2007 the VT NRCS archeologist provided technical assistance to the state recognized St. Francis/Sokoki band of the Abenaki Nation to monitor the controlled excavation of a house foundation and water/sewer lines to ensure that no unmarked Abenaki burials would be disturbed. This assistance was provided in close cooperation with the tribe, town zoning administrator and landowner in accordance with the Town Of Swanton Monument Road Unmarked Burial Protocol. No human remains or graves were identified during the operation.
- The VT NRCS archeologist solicits comments on all undertakings planned within the St. Francis/Sokoki band's ancestral homeland and is also a member of the Missisquoi Task Force on Native American Affairs who works closely with the tribe to protect ancient burials grounds and promote the educational and cultural opportunities of community members.

Northern Plains Region – Levi Montoya reported the following;

North Dakota

- North Dakota has awarded a Conservation Innovative Grant to the Standing Rock Tribal Conservation District. The proposal focuses on conservation education/outreach, vegetable propagation and marketing. The total cost of the proposal was \$74,000.
- Area Soil Survey staff met with some of the realty officers from Spirit Lake Sioux Tribe. This was both Tribal and BIA. As a result, a request for more GIS training was made. A follow-up meeting with NRCS State GIS Coordinator is scheduled.
- Spirit Lake Reservation producer received a payment for carbon credits through ND Farmers Union and the Chicago Climate Exchange. This was for seeding tilled cropland to grass. NRCS assisted him through the application process.
- On June 4th a Minnewaukan Field Office Staff Meeting was held at Luis Café in Fort Totten over breakfast. This was in part an outreach activity and to acquaint new employees of the NRCS with everyday life on the reservation.
- Anishinaube Cultural & Wellness Center hosts an annual National Youth Sports Camp during the month of June each year and we thought it would be ideal to hold the Conservation Day Camp during the same time frame as the National Youth Sports Camp. After some discussion, it was agreed upon to hold the Conservation Day Camp on the June 13, 2007 from 12:30 PM to 4:30 PM.

- The camp was held on the Anishinaube Cultural & Wellness Center grounds located 1.5 miles north of Belcourt, ND.
- There were between 120 and 130 youth that attended the camp. The age class was 12 through 16 years of age. The youth were split up into six groups and received instructions from various specialists. The categories were: Soils, treeID, Range, Wetland Ecosystems, Wildlife, Cultural– Each session was approximately 40 minutes in length.
- All in attendance spent the afternoon showing a great deal of interest which included the chaperones. Since this was a great success, it was decided upon by both Anishinaube and NRCS to make this an annual event.

Todd Hagel – Bismark, ND

Colorado – Southern Ute Tribe – No Report.

- Sterling Moss - Ignacio, CO

Colorado – Ute Mountain Ute – No report.

- Stephen Myers – Towaoc, CO

Colorado – Colorado has brought on AIANEA Member – Debra Clairmont to the Brighton Field Office. I have been in contact with Deb, assisting where I can.

Levi Montoya – AI/AN - SEPM

Montana – Blackfeet Tribe - Mark Johnson on the progress that has been made on the development of the Blackfeet Agriculture Resource Management Plan (ARMP). The first meeting of the 2nd round also had staff from the local BIA as well as the regional office in Billings. The Blackfeet Natural Resources CD (BNRCD) visited with BIA before the ARMP meeting to get feed back as to the direction the board is moving. BIA is pleased with the information collected at this time. Some discussion was held on the next step in the process, but no decision was made at this time.

Mark Johnson – Cut Bank, MT

Montana – Hey we're busy implementing stuff, forestry practices and weed control. Not too much exciting going on. There is an outreach forum planned for this fall. Flyer attached. Come on up. (SEE ATTACHMENT)

Herb Webb – Pablo, MT

Kansas - Met with the Kansas Civil Rights Committee to review the Civil Rights Work plan and to develop the AI/AN Special Emphasis Program Manager budget for FY2008. Working with the Manhattan Plant Materials Center concerning the maintenance of the Medicine Wheel at the center. Rodents, native and annual grasses and weeds are taking a toll on the Medicine Wheel. We are evaluating options to simplify the maintenance of the Medicine Wheel.

The new Acting Tribal Liaison Contact for Kansas is; John Piskac, 3705 Miller Parkway, Suite B Manhattan, KS 66503-7546, Email: John.piskac@ks.usda.gov

Mark Janzen - Salina, KS

Kansas - You can add the following as my contribution. Oh yeah, thought the first AIANEA newsletter was very good. It'd be neat to have an interview with each of our previous Presidents and see where they are and any insight they may have.

Pat Broyles, - Emporia, KS

South Dakota - Rangeland Days is in Eagle Butte (CRST). South Dakota State University and NRCS partnered with the Ziebach and Dewey County Conservation Districts and the Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe. Approximately 120 students participated.

Dana R. Vaillancourt - Huron, SD

Southeast Region – Pat Green reported the following:

During the past month I have contacted S.E. Regional members via email concerning the following topics.

- Soliciting nominations for AIANEA awards to be presented at the annual meeting in Texas.
- Asking each S.E. region state if they might be interested in hosting the 2009 national AIANEA conference within their respective state.
- Asking each S.E. member if they had information that they would like to share for our July national teleconference.
- Asking for an update of which of our states will be represented at our meeting in Texas. (over half at this time)

Other Activities to report, etc...

- S.E. Indian work group held their monthly teleconference hosted by Georgia. The main topic was the completion of our workgroup plan projected for October 1, 2007. This has truly been a group project
- Dan Rutledge, a district conservationist in Florida has been assigned to represent Florida on our work group replacing Roel Herra. To date in 2007 approximately \$330,000.00 has been spent with the Seminoles on The Big Cypress Reservation. A total of 3.5 million dollars spent with EQIP fund over the ten years on the Seminole tribal land.
- In Georgia, NRCS working with the Cherokee of Georgia to find alternative energy grants to establish solar power to run their tribal facilities.
- In North Carolina, NRCS organized a workshop on "Trees in Construction" for the eastern band of Cherokee construction departments demonstrating their (TREES) importance in stabilizing mountain soils.
- In Kentucky NRCS is working with Kentucky State University in organizing a statewide civil rights sponsored field day for low income and minority landowners featuring no-till tobacco and vegetables. Serious, all time record drought conditions here in KY. Roll hay already selling for \$40 to \$45 dollars per roll this early in the year.

West Region – Felix Nez reported the following:

Felix Nez and Thomas Tso

- Thomas Tso and I are working with (18) cooperators in the Dilkon Work Area on EQIP Conservation Projects, which are primarily Range Projects, only (2) Farm Contracts and (19) EQIP Cooperators in the Bodaway Gap. We are also providing CTA to (5) cooperators in our work areas.
- The primary resource concern identified within our work area is; WATER or insufficient amount of water for livestock. Our work area is mostly open range and we are trying to use "Water" as a tool to achieve "prescribed grazing". We have followed the NRCS nine steps of planning to identify alternatives in an open range situation. This is difficult as we are trying to achieve cooperation of 40 – 60 livestock permit holders. A method we have identified is using "natural boundaries" to evaluate or inventory resources as we proceed with the nine steps of planning.
- A chapter boundary or work area might encompass 200,000 to 300,000 acres; if we can identify natural boundaries we can develop conservation plans for smaller acreages. Highway Right of Way fences, Natural Ridges, Grazing District fences, Ephemeral

Washes, Mountains or Buttes are all examples to cut down our work acreages into smaller plans.

- Forming partnerships to achieve conservation projects has worked well for our work area. Dilkon NRCS and Bodaway Gap NRCS have partnered with the Little Colorado River SWCD, Navajo Chapters, Navajo Nation Department of Water Resources, NN Department of Agriculture, Bureau of Indian Affairs – Natural Resources, Bureau of Reclamation and the Plant Materials Center of Los Lunas, NM.
- Natural Resources Education is our second priority. We have partnered with Little Colorado River SWCD, UofA Cooperative Extension Service, Navajo Cooperative Extension Service, NN Department of Agriculture, Navajo RC & D NAV TEC, INCA/IAC, and NN Chapters to present “Conservation Awareness Days” at various locations in our work area. We have co-sponsored (6) Conservation Awareness Days and over 145 people have attended in FY 2007.

**Crystal Leonetti-Statewide Native Liaison
District Conservationist-Anchorage NRCS Field Office**

Crystal reported the following:

- Alaska NRCS has hired a part time ACES Tribal Outreach Specialist to assist the Alaska Native Liaison on outreach to current and potential Tribal Conservation Districts, existing Native Watershed Councils, and other duties as needed. The individual hired, Deborah Baines, is Tlingit Indian and a current NRCS cost-share recipient in Anchorage, Alaska. She has many experiences under her belt including working with Native Corporations, climbing to the peak of Denali, and dog mushing. She is a wonderful addition to the team.
- Crystal Leonetti, Anchorage District Conservationist, received funding to conduct a Rapid Watershed Assessment for the Chuit River, a salmon bearing river located next to the Denaina Athabaskan village of Tyonek in south central Alaska. This will be a two year assessment, and will include not only identifying potential conservation practices to be implemented, but also some traditional conservation methods used by the Tebughna people for thousands of years.

**Gina Kertzman-Pendleton, Oregon
INDIAN COUNTRY CATTLE DRIVE**

- Tribal Investors, volunteers take delivery, sort and brand 135 cow/calf pairs or 270 head of cattle.
- Bawling calves and smoking cowhide
- Tiicham Conservation District and Indian livestock owners on May 16, began initial year of the new Limited Liability Cattle Company
- Among the observers was Louie Dick; chairman of the Tiicham Conservation District and a long time advocate for
- Indian Country Livestock LLC was the first company formed under the newly enacted Tribal LLC Code rather than incorporating under state code.
- Prescribed Grazing has been implemented in Range Unit 8 utilizing off-stream watering facilities ..
- Interesting???
- Check out the newspaper article submitted by Gina Kertzman, the website is;
<http://www.umatilla.nsn.us/b%2011.pdf>
- This a great article!

Midwest Region – Buster Landin reported; Not recieved

South Central Region – Leota Burnett reported the following:

- Carol and Leota have been taking phone calls and emails regarding the poster and criteria for it.
- Emailed SC region for any reports they may have.
- Emailed local tribes with information on the GRP for Limited Resource Producers and Beginning Farmers.
- Leota and Carol participated in the Elders teleconference on June 22nd.
- Leota and Carol participated on Planning teleconference on June 18th.
- Carol and Leota went to Stillwater July 12th for the Heritage Poster judging . We set up the poster and Carol went over the criteria. We had nine judges and it was a diverse group. There were 12 posters sent in from 3 states. The 2007 winner is LaDon Smith from Boswell, OK. Ron Hilliard gave Carol permission to call her to let her know she had won. She was ecstatic and could hardly contain herself. She had lost her things, including all of her painting supplies, in a fire previously and had just started painting again about 6 months ago. How wonderful is that?! Plans are being made for the Photo op, media and the MOU.
- Leota contacted Steve Meyers about Norman’s travel because Colorado is picking up the tab this year. Steve is working directly with the State Office on the finances.

Carol Crouch reporting for OTCAC

- The Oklahoma Tribal Conservation Advisory Council (OTCAC) gave a presentation on July 10th to the Inter-Tribal Environmental Council.
- The Oklahoma Tribal Conservation Advisory Council (OTCAC) met with NRCS state leadership team and State Conservationist Ron Hilliard on June 13, 2007 regarding 2008 Outreach needs.
- The Oklahoma Tribal Conservation Advisory Council (OTCAC) attended the United the United South and Eastern Tribes, Inc. (USET) 2007 Semi-Annual Meeting to be hosted by the Alabama-Coushatta Tribe of Texas the last week of June at The Westin Galleria in Houston TX.

Proposed Constitution and Bylaws amendments

David Elliott recommended that it be covered at another conference.

AIANEA policy set by National Council

David reported that he working with other associations to review their policies in order to develop policies/guidelines for the AIANEA National Council. David discussed issues such as National Council “email voting” would be address in the guidelines/policies.

MOTION 07132007-3: Motion was made to develop an AIANEA Guidelines for policy references for the association.

Motion made by: Leota Burnett

Motion seconded: Levi Montoya

Motion passed: Unanimously

David Elliott appointed AIANEA President, 1st Chair, 2nd Chair, Treasure and Secretary

AIANEA Elder’s Committee proposal

Tanya extended an invitation from Louie Dick for National Council to attend the Elder’s Committee meeting at 7:00 pm on Monday, August 27, 2007, although Tanya will confirm if Louie’s invitation include the entire National Council or just officers. Tanya discussed the proposal for the Elders and Elders’ Committee to consider adding an Elder. The potential new Elder is Mr. Ted Herrera from Texas. Tanya reviewed some of the highlights from Mr. Herrera’s bio. She reported that the Elders and

committee members felt very positive about adding Mr. Herrera as an Elder. Tanya reported adding another Elder would increase the Elders Council to 9.

MOTION 07132007-4: Motion was made to accept Mr. Ted Herrera, from Texas, to the AIANEA Elders Council with his position to begin September 1, 2007.

Motion made by: Levi Montoya
Motion seconded: Millie Tittla
Motion passed: Unanimously

Tanya reviewed a proposal from the Elders Committee and Elders Council that AIANEA pay a portion of an Elder's family member's travel when they need to accompany the Elder to the annual conference because of medical reasons. Payment for the family member's travel will be considered on case-by-case basis and will be approved as funds are available and at the discretion of the National Council.

MOTION 07132007-5: Motion was made to accept to pay a portion of the travel expenses for one Elder's family member when traveling with the Elder to the training conference for medical reasons, and that this assistance will be considered on an individual basis by the National Council as funds are available and at the discretion of the National Council.

Motion made by: Leota Burnett
Motion seconded: Felix Nez
Motion passed: Unanimously

Tanya presented a request from Louie Dick to the AIANEA National Council to approved travel expenses to the 2007 annual conference for his son, Dallas Dick, for the sum of \$900.00.

MOTION 07132007-6: Motion was made to pay \$900.00 for travel expenses for Louie Dick's son, Dallas Dick, and waive Dallas's registration fee for 2007 annual conference.

Motion made by: Leota Burnett
Motion seconded: Levi Montoya
Motion passed: Unanimously

David Elliott opened up discussion regarding the AIANEA Elder's registration fee for the annual conference and whether it should be charged or not.

MOTION 07132007-7: Motion was made to waive the registration fee for Elders to attend the 2007 AIANEA annual conference and all future annual conferences.

Motion made by: Leota Burnett
Motion seconded: Levi Montoya
Motion passed: Unanimously

AIANEA Newsletter: *The Four Winds*

David reported that he had received positive feedback on the AIANEA newsletter.

AIANEA Drum

David reported that Herb Webb and Buster Landin are working on getting the drum completed. Tanya reported that the drum will be completed by the 2008 AIANEA annual conference.

Lifetime member's jackets

David Elliott opened up discussion on the lifetime jackets. The lifetime member's jacket will be research for future discussion.

Action Item: David Elliott will follow-up on the research and report back to the National Council for future discussion.

AIANEA items for 2007 conference

David proposed that the National Council approve an amount to purchase items such as; caps, shirts and etc. to be sold at the annual conference.

MOTION 07132007-8:

Motion was made to approve \$500.00 from AIANEA funds for the purchase of AIANEA merchandise.

Motion made by: Millie Titla
Motion seconded: Leota Burnett
Motion passed: Unanimously

Action Item: Tanya will work with Herb to order the merchandise and have delivered to conference.

2007 Annual Conference Update

Crystal updated the National Council on the planning actions completed for annual conference. Tanya reported that she has received 43 registrations.

Other Business

Tanya gave the following an update on AIANEA membership report: Total of 83 members, including 10 in East region, 20 in Midwest region, 13 in Northern Plains region, 9 in South Central region, 6 in Southeast region, and 25 in West region.

Review of Action items: Action items highlighted in red were reviewed

Adjourn and Next Meeting

The next meeting is on **Friday, August 10, 2007 at 11:30 am CST**. Call in information will be provided.

MOTION 07132007-9

Motion made that the July 2007 AIANEA meeting be adjourned at **1:15 pm**.

Motion made by: Pat Green
Motion seconded: Leota Burnett
Motion passed: Unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted by Carol Vallee Crouch, Secretary