



American Indian/Alaska Native Employees Association for NRCS

"Respect, Harmony, and Beauty"

**AMERICAN INDIAN / ALASKA NATIVE EMPLOYEES ASSOCIATION
FOR NRCS NATIONAL COUNCIL TELECONFERENCE
March 9, 2007**

Welcome and Roll call: David Elliott, AIANEA, President

Those present: David Elliott, David Wise, Pat Green, Millie Titla, Tanya Meyer-Dideriksen, Buster Landin, Ciro LoPinto, Dave Wise, Crystal Leonetti, Harold Bryant and Carol Crouch.

Not Present: Leota Burnett , Levi Montoya and Felix Nez

President, David Elliott called the meeting to order at approximately 11:43 am CST. He welcomed all and conducted the roll call. **Action items are noted in red. Motions are in blue.**

Approval of Minutes

The revised February minutes were reviewed and approved by Council members.

MOTION 03092007-1: Motion was made to accept the minutes of the February 2007 meeting.

Motion made by: Ciro LoPinto
Motion seconded: Pat Green
Motion passed: Unanimously

Treasurer's Report

Tanya reviewed the Treasurer's Report that was emailed prior to the teleconference. Tanya reported that she is currently has not opened the conference CD account. Tanya reported that she is working with the APIO on settling up with the silent action funds. Recommendation was made to postpone opening the of the conference CD account until the 2006 National Conference is completely reconciled.

MOTION 03092007-2: Motion was made to accept the AIANEA February Treasurer's Report.

Motion made by: Ciro LoPinto
Motion seconded: Pat Green
Motion passed: Unanimously

NHQ National Tribal Relations Coordinator Report

- Edie Morigeau was not on the teleconference for a monthly report; however, David Elliott provided an overview of the following;
 - Email from Edith stating that Conference approval was waiting for Chief's signature
- AI and AN: Guide to USDA programs
 - Send to AIANEA National Council for review
 - Millie made a recommendation that there be some consideration to the fact that not all tribes access to computer; hence hard copy needed
- MOU between BIA, FSA, and NRCS
 - Signed during the IAC/INCA meeting December, 2006
- New format for establishing Tribal Conservation Districts
 - Council advised new format being developed

Region Reports

Southeast Region – Pat Green reported the following:

- The NRCS SEPM in Georgia is working through the NRCS Plant Materials Center in Americas, GA to provide Alabama and Kentucky with of the original seed stock of Trail of Tears corn. Spring 2007 in Kentucky planting on Agro-Tourism farms.
- NRCS SE Work Group is continuing to work on their Work Group Plan of Action. Tentative date of completion is June 30th for distribution to National Office, East Region Conservationist and USET Tribes.
- In North Carolina NRCS/SEPM working on Elk Habitat Project on tribal ground reintroducing back into area. Partners include NRCS, National Park Services, RC&D, Extension Service and the Tribal Environmental Planning Commission.
- In South Carolina the Catawba Indian Nation recently completed an EQIP Project consisting of 26 acres of hardwoods planted and 27 acres of pines for wildlife habitat.
- In Tennessee the SEPM/DC recently hired a Cherokee lady as a district clerk in one of his three counties. Also created and enhanced American Indian Website for NRCS in Tennessee.
- SEPM in Virginia recently mailed informational letters to all Virginia Tribal Chiefs regarding potential NRCS employment for natives in Virginia. Ciro sent me a resume on a student and Virginia was very interested.

East Region – Ciro LoPinto reported the following:

Northern Plains Region – Levi Montoya reported the following:

West Region – Felix Nez reported the following:

Arizona:

1. Conservation Awareness Workshop scheduled in Bodaway/Gap Chapter on March 14, 2007. Topics include:
 1. Livestock Management
 2. Range Management
 3. Conservation Planning
 4. Farm Bill and Conservation Programs
 5. Cropland
 6. Eligibility
 7. Cost – Share
 8. Conservation Practice
 - Sponsored by: Little Colorado River SWCD, Dilkon & Bodaway/Gap NRCS Offices, Bodaway Gap Chapter, Chapter Land Use Planning and Nav Tech.

2. Conservation Awareness Workshop scheduled in Tolani Lake Chapter on March 24, 2007. Topics include:
 1. Financial Management Workshop by Katherine Minthorn-Goodluck of IAC, Northwest Region.
 2. Seven Generations Planning by Dick Gooby and Emory Chee, INCA Executive Office of Montana.
 - These workshops were scheduled as a result of the 2006 INCA/IAC Conference in Las Vegas, NV, December 4 – 8, 2006.
 - Sponsors: Little Colorado River SWCD, USDA – NRCS Dilkon/Bodaway/Gap Field Offices, Risk Management Agency, IAC, INCA, Tolani Lake Chapter.

3. Katherine Minthorn Goodluck also has the following schedule for workshops:

• Peach Springs	March 23, 2007
• Chinle SWCD	March 26, 2007
• Ganado, Fort Defiance SWCD	March 27, 2007
• Zuni Indian Reservation	March 28, 2007
• Hopi Indian Reservation	March 29, 2007
• Gila River Indian Tribe	March 30, 2007

UTAH NRCS

Assistance/Outreach to Native Americans in Area 1

There are two different tribes within the boundaries of Area 1 that we have provided assistance to. They are the Confederated Tribe of the Goshute Reservation and the Northern Band of the Shoshone Tribe.

Assistance/Outreach provided to the Confederated Tribe of the Goshute Reservation:

Burke Davenport and Cindy Burton have on-going outreach with the Confederated Tribe of the Goshute Reservation on a wide array of issues.

EQIP:

The Tribe has 4 old EQIP contracts & in 2006 was granted another EQIP contract. Burke has been working diligently to facilitate progress on all of the Tribe's contracts as follows:

1. Cultural resources were flagged in prep for 900 acre chaining
2. Worked with Tribal leaders helping them prepare for chaining and oversaw the chaining
3. Revision of 400 acre brush management specs to support sage grouse habitat and work with Tribal leaders to assure that the revision meets their needs
4. Pursuit of cultural resource contractors for 11 spring development projects.
5. 3 trips to Ibapah with soil scientist, Ray Grow, to complete all of the wetland determinations for the 11 springs, slated for development
6. Organized a grazing lessee meeting for the Tribe to better understand roles & responsibilities on their reservation grazing lands
7. Working right now with Tribal leaders to help them prepare for the second chaining and seeding of the 900 acres
8. Cindy is working with the Tribe to cancel one contract that is essentially completed except for non-cost shared items.
9. Cindy is asking for TSP \$\$\$ in FY07 budget to complete the remaining cultural resource survey work which includes 2 EQIP contracts
10. Brock Benson assisted Burke with range inventory, development of a grazing plan, and spring development plan.

CTA – General:

Cindy has provided most of the CTA-general assistance. Jeremy Maestas has provided excellent coordination efforts related to inter-agency habitat manipulation.

1. Completed the Deep Creek Watershed CRMP and its public meeting at Ibapah, hosted by the Shambip SCD board
2. Completed the cooperative agreement that will set up an NRCS Service Center at Ibapah and allow us to hire a term employee to cover the workload there
3. Met with Tribal Council to provide an overview of our current contract obligations and future interest in working with the Tribe
4. Jeff, Cindy & 2 RD employees visited the Tribe to share information on Rural Developments many funding/grant options for rural communities. Out of that came the Tribe's desire to develop a strategic plan.
5. Currently working with the Tribe to facilitate the first meeting towards the strategic plan.
6. Jeremy organized a sage grouse meeting to discuss the work done in Ibapah and the implications to the kinds of projects we are now promoting out there. Overriding purpose was to identify locations of habitat manipulation and help all interested agencies coordinate their efforts better to the benefit of sage grouse.
7. Jeremy participated in tours of Ibapah to showcase the habitat work that is being done.

RC&D:

Jeff Williams is working with the Tribe to develop a strategic plan. RC&D is also the financial agent for the habitat inventory work being done in Ibapah (CPI-Deep Creek Sensitive Wildlife Species

Assessment). Jeff also obtained funding for habitat inventory work and is managing the CPI grant and payment of contractors.

Assistance/Outreach provided to the Northern Band of the Shoshone:

All program announcements have been hand delivered by staff from the Tremonton Office to the Tribal office in Brigham City to assure that they are getting the same information that is delivered to everyone else. Scott Ferguson also sent out information on the Bear River RC&D program and a questionnaire requesting comments on the RC&D 5 year Area plan.

Heather Hunsaker reported the following;

2007 Work the Paiute Tribe, UTAH

WA Co. Shivwits Band

The contract with the Shivwits is currently being reviewed and updated. The contract currently treats range issues; they are putting in a pipeline and troughs. Due to the recent fires on their land the band is interested in either updating the contract or writing a new one to treat erosion, weeds and to plant fire prevention grasses. I (Heather Hunsaker) have met with the Shivwits Band to inform them of the Farm Bill Programs that are available and to discuss their natural resource concerns.

- Jason Bradshaw is meeting with them to make the final positions.

Millard Co. Kanosh Band

There is a current contract with the Kanosh band that has installed a pipeline and is in the process of replacing their pond lining. The band is interested in doing a conservation plan on their land to improve range and agricultural practices. I (Heather Hunsaker) have met with the Kanosh Band to inform them of the Farm Bill Programs that are available and to discuss their natural resource concerns.

- Lars Rasmussen is currently working with them.

Iron Co. Cedar Band & Indian Peak Band

There are currently no contracts with either band but I (Heather Hunsaker) have met with the Shivwits Band to inform them of the Farm Bill Programs that are available and to discuss their natural resource concerns. I have scheduled to meet with the Indian Peak Band to do the same.

Sevier Co. Koosharem Band

I (Heather Hunsaker) have scheduled to meet with the Shivwits Band to inform them of the Farm Bill Programs that are available and to discuss their natural resource concerns.

I (Heather Hunsaker) have been hired as the tribal liaison to improve these relationships and set up an outreach plan to the tribes. I have spoken at the Tribal council, I have met personally with the Tribal Chairwoman Lora Tom and have a good relationship with her and as mentioned above I have personally met with most of the band councils. The outreach plan for working with the tribes will include more of a presence by local field offices in the band and Tribal council meetings.

Crystal Leonetti, Statewide Native Liaison, District Conservationist, Alaska reported the following:

- A "Help Us Help the Land" workshop was conducted by Crystal Leonetti at the Alaska Village Initiatives conference where 150 Alaska Natives come from all over the state to learn about business and natural resources. The discussion was lively!
- At the upcoming AACD (Alaska Association of Conservation Districts) Spring Meeting, there will be several Alaska Native related events, including: an informational meeting about Tribal Conservation Districts, where Darrel Dominick is the key speaker; an Alaska Native (ANCSA) Regional Corporation and NRCS introductory meeting; and a presentation on the Farm Bill proposal by Patrick Atagi from the USDA Office of Native American Programs. Darrel Dominick is also on the main AACD agenda to talk about partnerships and give general comments.

Midwest Region – Buster Landin reported;

William Hunt, State Conservationist, Minnesota, reported the following updates for AIANEA on activities in Minnesota:

- Schedule meeting to discuss Cultural Resources Protocol and outline procedural process for coordination work with the Red Lake Band Historical Preservation Officer, the Director of the Red Lake DNR and NRCS.
- Pam May, Red Lake Reservation Band member and Giziibii RC&D Council member, attended the Cooperative Conservation Partnership Leadership training in Nashville, TN
- A Structure for Water Control was completed using EQIP fund on the Lower Rice Lake on the White Earth Reservation. This project was a partnership between BIA, NRCS, White Earth Natural Resources Department and White Earth Department of Transportation which will help White Earth Reservation manage their wild rice resource.
- NRCS attended the 4th Annual Great Lakes Indigenous Farming Conference on February 9 -10, 2007 at the Maplelag Resort in Minnesota on the White Earth Reservation. Dustin Jasken, Tribal Liaison did a presentation on soils at the conference.
- The White Earth Tribal Conservation District is the first TCD in MN. Representatives include White Earth Tribal Council employees, White Earth Land Recovery Project (WELRP), White Earth Anishanabeg Center, White Earth Tribal Community College (WETCC), and Sah Kah Tay Indigenous Preservation Society.

South Central Region – Leota Burnett reported the following:

- Leota participated on Elders Teleconference March 6.
- Leota sent a letter to State Conservationist, Ron Hilliard, regarding his support to the American Indian Heritage poster
- Follow-up email was sent to State Conservationist, Ron Hilliard on March 6, 2007.
- Leota is busy working on an Outreach and OTCAC partnership meeting with the nine tribes within Northeastern Oklahoma.

Carol Crouch reporting for OTCAC

- The Oklahoma Tribal Conservation Advisory Council attended the OACD meeting in Oklahoma City, February 25 through 27, 2007.

- OTCAC has a business meeting schedule with new State Conservationist Ron Hilliard on March 28.
- Carol received confirmation and inquires from two of the tribal Colleges regarding the AIANEA Scholarship that she mailed.
- Carol participated on Elders Teleconference March 6.

2007 Annual Conference

David Elliott reported that he had been working with other NRCS employee associations and State Conservationist for their input on projected budget constraints that may hinder the approval of NRCS AIANEA members from being approved for travel to attend for the 2007 AIANEA conference. David reported that there will NOT be a decision on canceling the 2007 annual conference at the present time. David projected that a decision could not be made until NRCS States receive their final budgets; within the next two weeks.

Crystal Leonetti provided an overview of the planning accomplishments to date. Harold Bryant provided an overview of the arrangements made with the hotel, such as; rooms, food, and registration. Recommendation was made by several National Council members to put together a projected 2007 AIANEA conference cost for the National Council to review. Projected costs would include the cost to hold the conference and the cost to AIANEA if the conference is cancelled.

Action item: David will work with Crystal, Tanya, Harold and Leota to put together the proposed cost to hold the 2007 AIANEA conference.

Elders Committee Report

David Elliott requested that Elder Committee Chair, Tanya provide the National Council with a brief overview of the Elders Committee teleconference that was held on March 6, 2007.

The Elders Committee met by teleconference on Tuesday, March 6. We had good participation, including two Elders (Joe and Leland). There are still a lot of questions about the new hide that is to be made and what the Elders are to provide, so we will schedule another teleconference soon to include all Elders and their representatives, in order to accomplish complete understanding of the goal and needs for the hide. We will also use this teleconference to begin to develop the committee roles and responsibilities.

The Elders are now invited to each National Council teleconference and will be reminded monthly by their representatives. Leland provided some guidance for the association on the 2007 conference, which I can share during that agenda item.

The committee does have one proposal for the National Council, requiring a vote. The committee passed a motion to create a new category of AIANEA membership to read as such: Elder Council Lifetime Membership. This category would be for the Elders on the AIANEA Elder's Council and would waive the membership dues. If the Elders wish to still pay the dues, we will accept that and give them the choice of what portion of AIANEA they would like to donate to (i.e.: scholarship fund).

Tanya reported that the Elders Committee made the recommendation to make the AIANEA Elders lifetime members to the AIANEA. Tanya reported that there are still many questions regarding the hide, therefore, she will be arranging a teleconference to discuss the hide, roles and responsibilities and Elders recommendation on their participation on future AIANEA conference agenda.

MOTION 03092007-3

Motion was made to accept the recommendation from the Elders Committee to make the AIANEA Elders lifetime members to the AIANEA and to add their membership recognition to the AIANEA bylaws.

Motion made by: Ciro LoPinto
Motion seconded: Millie Titla
Motion passed: Unanimously

Action item: Tanya will put together the appropriate language to add an amendment to the AIANEA bylaws to add the AIANEA Elders as lifetime members to AIANEA.

Action item: Proposed amendment; to add the AIANEA Elders as lifetime members to the AIANEA in bylaws will be posted on the AIANEA for 30 day review. Vote to accept said bylaw amendment will be pending appropriate voting process.

AIANEA Newsletter

Buster Landin made the recommendation for the AIANEA National Council to consider putting together a Newsletter for AIANEA members. After discussion; the recommendation was made for Buster to put together a proposal for the AIANEA communication committee to consider the future development of a quarterly AIANEA newsletter. Carol Crouch agreed to assist Buster with the Newsletter proposal. The AIANEA communication committee will review Buster's proposal and make their recommendations to the National Council for approval.

Action Item: Buster will put together a proposal for the AIANEA communication committee to review.

"Visioning" Proposal

Ciro LoPinto requested that the National Council provide him with some direction/assessment on whether or not the National Council wants to move forward with the "Visioning" proposal that he had submitted to the National Council to review. Ciro reported that he must let the consultant, presenting the "Visioning" proposal, know within the next two weeks. David Elliott suggested that an email be sent to the National Council to get their consensus on whether not they feel that the AIANEA should move forward to secure the "Visioning" consultant for the 2007 annual conference, the 2008 annual conference or for the association to consider a different proposal/approach.

Action item: David Elliott will develop an email to send to the National Council to get their consensus on whether not they feel that the AIANEA should move forward to secure the "Visioning" consultant for the 2007 annual conference, or the 2008 annual conference or for the association to consider a different proposal/approach.

Producer/small farmer conservation award

David Elliott reported that Buster had submitted a request that the AIANEA develop a producer/small farmer award. David recommended that the same procedure be used by Buster that was recommended for the newsletter. Buster is to put together a proposal for a producer/small farmer award and then present it to the AIANEA awards committee. The committee will review and work on the award criteria and then present their recommendation to the National Council for approval.

Action Item: Buster will put together a proposal for the AIANEA awards committee to review.

Other Business: There was no other business.

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

Adjourn and Next Meeting

The next meeting is on April 13, 2007 at 11:30 am CST. Call in information will be provided.

MOTION 03092007-4: Motion was made that the March 2007 AIANEA meeting be adjourned at 12:52 pm.

Motion made by: Buster Landin

Motion seconded: Dave Wise

Motion passed: Unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted by Carol Vallee Crouch, Secretary