



American Indian/Alaska Native Employees Association for NRCS

"Respect, Harmony, and Beauty"

**AMERICAN INDIAN / ALASKA NATIVE EMPLOYEES ASSOCIATION
FOR NRCS NATIONAL COUNCIL TELECONFERENCE
May 11, 2007**

Welcome and Roll call: David Elliott, AIANEA, President

Those present: David Elliott, Millie Titla, Tanya Meyer-Dideriksen, Buster Landin, Ciro LoPinto, Carol Crouch, Pat Green, and Felix Nez.

Not Present: David Wise and Levi Montoya

President, David Elliott called the meeting to order at approximately **11:42 am CST.**

Approval of Minutes

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

MOTION 05112007-1: Motion was made to accept the minutes of the March 2007 meeting.

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

Approval of Minutes

The revised April minutes that were taken to document were reviewed and approved by Council members.

MOTION 05112007-2: Motion was made to accept the minutes of the April meeting.

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

Treasurer's Report for April 13, 2007 Scheduled Meeting

Tanya reviewed the Treasurer's Report for March that was to be reviewed on April 13, 2007. She reported that we had 5 members pay their dues, 20 membership pins were purchased by a member and that the association had receive \$3000.00 from the USDA Civil Rights Division to support the 2006 AIANEA Annual Conference. Tanya updated the National Council on the following; Money Market account, Scholarship account, 2006 Annual conference expenditures and that the 8734 for the IRS 501-3C had been completed and sent to the IRS.

MOTION 05112007-3:

Motion was made to accept the AIANEA March Treasurer's Report for the April 13, 2007, AIANEA monthly conference be approved as presented.

Motion made by: Felix Nez
Motion seconded: Millie Tilta
Motion passed: Unanimously

Treasurer's Report for May 11, 2007 Scheduled Meeting

Tanya reviewed the April Treasurer's Report for the May 11, 2007 National Council monthly teleconference. She reported that we had 3 members pay their dues, final luncheon bill for the Tour for the 2006 Annual Conference had been paid. Tanya updated the National Council on the following; Money Market account; Scholarship CD had been renewed ; the 2006 Annual conference expenditures had been closed out; Conference CD had been re-opened; a donation will be transferred to the scholarship account and that the 990EZ form had been completed and submitted to IRS.

MOTION 05112007-4:

Motion was made to accept the AIANEA April Treasurer's Report for the May 11, 2007, AIANEA monthly conference be approved as presented.

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

NHQ National Tribal Relations Coordinator Report

Edie Morigeau was not on the teleconference for a monthly report.

Region Reports

Southeast Region – Pat Green reported the following:

- In Alabama NRCS provided their first official training to all Indian tribes in Alabama. FSA and RD were also included. Seven of the nine tribes were represented. A total of 47 individuals received the awareness training.
- The Tribal Liaison in Georgia was able to go to Alabama and spend a couple of days with David Elliott, SEPM, on some of the activities going on in Alabama.
- David, in Alabama, is working with US Forest Service in finalizing the details for a workshop on the Poarch Band of Creek Indians called "Building Effective Government Relations with American Indian Tribes".
- In Georgia, NRCS SEPM is working with 319 on American Indian Burke Farm. They also participate in the CRP and EQIP Programs.
- In South Carolina, Chief Gilbert who has worked closely with NRCS in the conservation arena has resigned after over forty years as chief. Also South Carolina AI SEPM Cliff Eaddy has taken a new DC job in another part of South Carolina and we want to congratulate him and wish him the best on his new assignment.
- In Virginia the SEPM has recently sent out information to all tribes telling them about job opportunities with NRCS. Presently planning the NRCS Annual State-wide Cultural Diversity Day in August.

- And here in Kentucky, I have received some of the Trail of Tears original corn seed to be planted on two sites here, one of which is of Indian descent. He also makes his living in Agro-Tourism on his farm named Bear-O-Wallow.
- I'm also putting the finishing touches on a state-wide Civil Rights Committee Power Point Program for the State Civil Rights Meeting in Lexington, KY.

East Region – Ciro LoPinto reported that his STCO is addressing the Confederation of the Haudenosaunee to offer Consultation.

Northern Plains Region – Levi Montoya reported the following;

West Region – Felix Nez reported the following:

- Currently working with Harold Bryant and Ivan Joe on the Poster Session for the 2007 AIANEA Training Conference. We are working on the following forms;
 1. Poster Form with specs
 2. Display Form – states, private companies and etc
 3. Vendor Form – Native crafts and etc.
- Completed the ranking of (4) Scholarship Applicants for the 2007 AIANEA Scholarship. (2) Applicants were selected and Kurt Cates our Chairman will notify the applicants.

Alaskan Receives USDA Unsung Hero Award



(above left) Crystal Leonetti and past APIO Vice President Manny Weil (NRCS photo)

(top row, left) accepting the Unsung Hero award for Crystal this week in Washington was acting Director of the NRCS Conservation Engineering Division Noller Herbert (NRCS photo — click to enlarge)



Crystal Leonetti received the Organization of Professional Employees of the US Department of Agriculture *Unsung Hero* award this week for her hard work and many accomplishments as Statewide Native Liaison, District Conservationist for the Anchorage field office, and American Indian/Alaska Native Special Emphasis Program Manager. Highlights of her many accomplishments include developing a three-day course for Alaska NRCS employees to learn about Alaska Native land complexities, cultures, and history called *Working Effectively with Alaska Natives*. She was responsible for working with Alaska's first-ever Tribal Conservation District, expanding that field office area by 5,000 square miles. She organized and facilitated the first NRCS meeting of Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act Regional Corporations. Crystal was elected President of the American Indian Alaska Native Employees Association in 2006, and co-chaired the first-ever joint NRCS Asian Pacific Islander Organization (APIO) and American Indian and Alaska Native Employee Association conference in 2006.

Crystal's principal goals include raising a family with her husband, Ed; continuing a successful career with NRCS; and establishing rapport and good working relationships between NRCS and Alaska's Native Corporations, Villages, and Tribes.

Blythe Koyiyumptewa and Dan Bloedel reported;

Please visit the following website:

<http://www.dnrconference2007.navajo.org/index.html> has information regarding the 2007 Navajo Nation Division of Natural Resources Conference Expo. The website has the agenda, hotel information, meeting center and etc.

Midwest Region – Buster Landin reported;

Iowa

Tanya reported that Iowa is working on a seeding with the Sac and Fox Tribe regarding their buffalo herd (EQIP).

South Central Region – Leota Burnett reported the following:

- Leota and Carol wrote a letter to the State Conservationist explaining that Oklahoma had been selected as the lead state in developing the 2007 American Indian Heritage Month Poster. In the letter she stated that the South Central Region also included Louisiana, Texas and Arkansas and we were looking for support and funding so we can do the poster.
- Leota sent a follow up email to the State Conservationist regarding the funding and support for the poster.
- Sent emails out to members in the South Central Region and the State Conservationist's let them know the SCR received funding for the poster and to solicit theme ideas from them for it.
- Leota participated in the Elders teleconference on April 26th and finished the minute keeping for Carol.
- Received 4 scholarship applications from Kurt Cates for review and selection. Sent my choices back to Kurt.
- Attended the OTCAC meeting held in March at the Afton Vo-tech. It was not well attended.
- Sent wetland book ideas to the Shawnee Tribe for them to purchase for the Wetland Training we will be assisting them with in July.
- Attended the Quarterly Civil Rights meeting in Stillwater where there was some discussion on SEPM annual conferences and training. Budget is tight (surprise) and it was said we will be sent on a "case by case" basis as budget allows.

Carol Crouch reporting for OTCAC

- The Oklahoma Tribal Conservation Advisory Council (OTCAC) was one of the major sponsors for a regional Ag Trade Show was held at the LeFlore County Fairgrounds on May 2nd. Over 400 people attended the event. Speakers discussed topics of interest ranging from beef production to poultry operations. The morning session was primarily for poultry producers. Speakers and topics included: Common poultry health concerns discussed by Dr. Scott Gustin with Cobb-Vantress, Inc. Animal welfare issues and how it affects the animal industry was covered by Dr. Chris Ashworth from Monsanto. Chris Rice, OSU SE Area Extension Agronomist, provided information on forage and nutrient management. An OK representative discussed litter options. National Animal ID update was presented by an Oklahoma Department of Agriculture representative. J. J. Jones, OSU SE Area Economist, explained the implications of ethanol production and feed by-

products costs. Wayne Smith, OSU Area Extension Fire Ant Specialist, talked about fire ant control, quarantines and litter transfer implications.

The key note speaker was **Christina Muedeking, Regional Assistant Chief, Natural Resources Conservation Service, Washington, DC**. She discussed the 2007 Farm Bill proposals and voluntary conservation. She announced a second Conservation Security Program payment for 2007. The payment will be made in the next few weeks. Producers will not have to come into the office for payment.

Lunch was provided by OK Farms. Over 40 exhibitors had booths ranging from Ag chemicals, farm equipment and supplies, metal and fencing supplies to feed and seed dealers. Door prizes donated by area businesses were awarded throughout the morning and afternoon sessions. The LeFlore, Latimer, Haskell, Sequoyah and Sebastian County, and Talihina Conservation Districts, and OSU Extension Service sponsored this event. Other major sponsors included: the Choctaw Nation, Oklahoma Grazing Lands Conservation Association, USDA/NRCS and USDA/FSA.

- The Oklahoma Tribal Conservation Advisory Council (OTCAC) has a meeting set with NRCS state leadership team and State Conservationist Ron Hilliard on June 13, 2007.
- The Oklahoma Tribal Conservation Advisory Council (OTCAC) will be attending the United the United South and Eastern Tribes, Inc. (USET) 2007 Semi-Annual Meeting to be hosted by the Alabama-Coushatta Tribe of Texas on June 4-7 at The Westin Galleria in Houston TX.
- The Oklahoma Tribal Conservation Advisory Council (OTCAC) has seated their new board members;
 - Billy Wilson
 - Darrel Dominick
 - Ben Pollard
 - Clay Pope
- Carol and Leota held and facilitated a planning committee meeting regarding the 2007 NRCS American Indian Heritage Poster on May 8, 2007 at the NRCS State Office in Stillwater, OK. Results of the meeting;
 - Theme selected
 - Judges nominated
 - Timeline set:
 - FNM
 - Contracting
 - Artists solicitation
- Carol Leota had a meeting with State Conservationist Ron Hilliard on May 8, 2007 to discuss the timeline and silicate/confirm his support for the American Indian Heritage poster.

2007 Annual Conference Update

Leota Burnett reviewed of the following items for the 2007 Annual Training Conference; Tentative agenda, limited cost for AV equipment, vendors, notice for poster and papers, there will 24 stops available for the papers and posters, call for success stories, need for live auctioneer and hotel rates will be honored three days prior to the conference and 3 days after the conference.

Tanya reviewed the following items for the 2007 Annual Training Conference; the need for a black line JPG for conference bags, registration form should be completed next week and the conference registration fee will be determined next week.

David Elliott reviewed the following items for the 2007 Annual Training Conference; letters that have been sent out to key NRCS divisions and individuals regarding the conference, the National Bulletin that was released and he shared positive comments that were received from the National Emphasis Program Manager, Gerald Rouse regarding the training comments in the tentative agenda.

Action Item: Carol Crouch will contact, Linda Hardin to seek and send a black line of the AIANEA logo to Harold Bryant.

Action Item: All AIANEA National Council members that would like to have their State Conservationist and supervisor to receive a letter from President, David Elliott; will email David Elliott with a request and email addresses within the next week.

Action Item: President, David Elliott, will develop a letter and administer the National Council members request for an "Attendance Support" letter.

Visioning Process Discussion

Much discussion took place on this subject. It was reported that the National Council did make the decision to postpone the Visioning Process until the conference 2008. This subject needs to be an agenda item for the 2007 Business Meeting in Corpus Christi. Further discussion is needed to determine exactly what will be discussed at that meeting and if a membership vote will take place.

Tanya suggested that, if the membership doesn't vote on the visioning process at the 2007 Business Meeting, that the National Council set a date shortly after the conclusion of the 2007 conference to make all decisions related to the visioning process for 2008. This includes the process to be used, if a professional facilitator will be utilized and who that will be.

Action item: David Elliott is to develop a letter explaining that the visioning process was postponed. The letter will be used to inform the facilitator that her services for the visioning process, postponed to a future date, can not be determined until October or November, 2007.

2009 Annual Conference Location

David discussed that the National Council had agreed several years ago that the location of the training conference would be known 2 years in advance. This means that location proposals for the 2009 conference need to be presented at the 2007 conference. The Council discussed the conference rotation and whether it has been used or not. David shared that the rotation is: W, SC, SE, MW, E, NP. Tanya shared that we have been following that rotation at least since 2002. We will sway from that rotation in 2008 by going to Michigan. The rotation would have been to Southeast in 2008 and Midwest in 2009. Since we will be in the Midwest in 2008, proposals from the Southeast will be accepted for 2009 (a temporary flip).

Discussion continued that proposals from other regions should not be excluded. National Council decided that the region that the conference is rotated to will be emphasized and the Regional

Representative for that region will need to solicit for proposals. In addition, other proposals that are submitted will also be considered by the membership. Proposals from the Southeast and any other regions will be presented to the membership during the 2007 Business Meeting in Corpus Christi.

Action: David Elliott will develop an announcement regarding this for the website.

Other Business

Elder Committee Report

Tanya reported on the April 26 Elder Committee teleconference. The new hide was thoroughly discussed and clarified. The hide may need to be purchased by AIANEA. Discussion took place and the following motion was made:

MOTION 05112007-5 Motion was made for AIANEA to pay \$500.00 for the hide. If the cost of the hide is higher than \$500.00. Tanya Meyer-Dideriksen will make an additional request to the National Council.

Motion made by: Ciro LoPinto

Motion seconded: Felix Nez

Motion passed: Unanimously

The Elders are currently considering whether they want an Elder on the conference planning committee. Louie discussed the need for a document that states that the Drum CD, hides, and eagle staff is property of the AIANEA and cannot be sold. This would serve as guidance for future National Council.

Tanya developed a letter for Elder Representatives to provide to State Conservationists in the states where the Elders reside to request financial assistance with the Elders' travel expenses to the conference. Several Elders already have confirmation that their costs will be covered by NRCS or their tribe, which adds success to the conference by lowering the registration fee. This will likely allow approval of more NRCS employees to receive the valuable training at the conference.

Drum

David shared that an AIANEA member approached him to suggest that AIANEA purchase a drum. Tanya shared that this has been discussed in the past with no decision made. Ciro suggested another option would be to purchase a traveling case for the drum that is currently used.

Action: David Elliott will contact Gerald Allison to discuss this.

Scholarship Donation Form

Carol mentioned before she left the teleconference that some Oklahoma tribes have inquired about donations to the scholarship fund and that a scholarship donation form is needed on the website. The recently developed scholarship letter went to all members, strictly regarding direct deposit donations. Tanya reported that a scholarship donation form had previously been developed, but not sure if it is on the website currently.

Action: David Elliott will check to see if a form currently exists. If not, he will request the Scholarship Committee develop one for the National Council to review and approve.

2008 Conference

Millie reported that the hotel contract for the 2008 conference is available for review before signatures. Further planning of the 2008 conference will not take place until AIANEA's and SAIGE's 2007 conferences conclude.

Action: Millie Titla will provide the hotel contract for the National Council to review.

Tanya reviewed the action items she recorded after Carol left the meeting. David reviewed the prior action items that he had record of.

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

Adjourn and Next Meeting

The next meeting is on Friday, June 8, 2007 at 11:30 am CST. Call in information will be provided.

MOTION 05112007-6

Motion made that the May 2007 AIANEA meeting be adjourned at 1:28 pm.

Motion made by: Leota Burnett

Motion seconded: Felix Nez

Motion passed: Unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted by Carol Vallee Crouch, Secretary