

Wisconsin Tribal Conservation Advisory Council Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, June 16, 2010

NRCS State Office, Madison, WI

Meeting called to order at 9:10 am by Jonathan Pyatskowit.

1. Roll Call

Present: FCPC (Nate Guldán), Ho-Chunk (Sara Schmidt), LCO (Brett McConnell), Menominee (Jonathan Pyatskowit), Mole Lake (Roman Ferdinand), St. Croix (Katie Stariha), Stockbridge-Munsee (Bob Frank)

Others Present: Tom Fredrickson (NRCS), JoAnn Cruse (APHIS), Keith Sengbusch (NRCS)

2. Approval of Agenda

There were several items that needed to be added to the agenda:

- Add Forestry Discussion under 3) Finalize Technical Recommendations List to present to the State Conservationist
- Add 2501 Grant discussion under 6) c. Funding update
- Add item 8) Website
- Add item 9) Logo

MOTION: Motion to approve agenda with additions. Motion by LCO, seconded by St. Croix. All ayes, zero opposed, motion carried.

3. Approval of Minutes

MOTION: Motion to approve May 11, 2010 minutes. Motion by Stockbridge-Munss, seconded by LCO. All ayes, zero opposed, motion carried.

Greg indicated that he wanted to BE ADDED to the next agenda to talk about the NRCS GIS Soil data training.

4. Technical Recommendations

Nate and Jonathan talked to Pat Leavenworth last week about these recommendations and Jonathan sent a copy of the technical recommendations to her (attached).

The Technical Recommendations were distributed and discussed.

- 1) Discussed Tribal only docket and gave examples of why we feel this is needed.

- 2) Keith's retirement concerns and Bad River and Red Cliff need an NRCS liaison to support them.
- 3) Add Aquaculture Pond – 397 to EQIP. Fish and Wildlife imbalance among and within populations is the resource concern that we think fits. Matt is going to put the whole resource concern list on the NRCS website. This only allows for the construction of new hatcheries.
- 4) New larger culvert size – there was a mistake, it actually comes out to \$218.50/foot at 100%.
- 5) Same as #3
- 6) Same as #3 – Cleaning out of ponds may fall into Fishpond Management
- 7) Biodegradable netting
- 8) Ho-Chunk - Barriers and fencing for community gardens
- 9) WTCAC would like to get beaver dams added at the rates and scenarios proposed in 2009.
- 10) Adding invasive controls under practices because they could not be added to Pest Management
- 11) Same as #10
- 12) Same as #10

On follow up to last year, need to bring up #5, #6, #8B, and #9.

5. Forestry Concerns

Brett indicated that there seems to be some confusion on getting forest management plans for TSI projects. They have a couple BIA foresters, each track of land is micromanaged down to 20 acres in size and they come up with a plan. NRCS keeps indicating to Brett that they need more information. Brett indicated that all of the information is in their IRMP but it doesn't seem to be enough. NRCS talked to the foresters directly and it still wasn't good enough. Brett is unsure of how to meet the requirements that NRCS is requesting and doesn't know how to move forward. Brett feels there is some major confusion as to what is going on. To Brett, the professional foresters' ideas should be good enough, they are professionals and this is what they do. Greg Rebman (NRCS State Forester) came in – Brett explained the issue to Greg. Greg is going to meet with Mike Koehler next week to look at LCO management plans. Greg feels that it probably won't be an issue but won't know for sure until he can look at the plans next week.

6. APHIS Update

JoAnn Cruse indicated that Jason Suckow, Wildlife Service State Director for WI, is also at the meeting. JoAnn gave her updated first. Everyone can start checking EAB traps because they are about 10 days ahead of schedule for EAB emergence. If we are collecting specimens, try to get them in and they can get them identified quickly. APHIS will pick them up or they can be mailed in. Please stick them in the freezer so they don't degrade. A county in far northeastern

Iowa had a find along the Mississippi River. Houston County, MN confirmed they have EAB, Houston County was under quarantine before they found it, Iowa county was just added to quarantine. Please get GPS readings on EAB trap locations and send them in, preferably in decimal degrees. DNR contacted her and they are looking at doing biocontrol research sites. Consultation and comment letters need to be sent out for it, but the permits are in place. They have leafy spurge biocontrol and can get beetles for free for Tribes. Collections for them will be at the end of June. She was on a 3 week assignment in Fort Collins, Colorado. She worked on a package that would be put together for delivery at Regional/National/one on one tribal meetings with the ultimate goal of developing an MOU dealing with Emergency Response Plans for Tribes if there was a plant health issue. They need to have discussions ahead of time with Tribes on how things will be handled. One example was the Brown County EAB quarantine that affected Oneida.

If anyone is interested in ash tree submersion to stockpile ash for future generations (a study to see how it will work), please contact her.

Jason Suckow indicated that Wildlife Services is non regulatory which puts them into an interesting situation working for Tribes. Wildlife damage and disease issues are what they usually work on. They assist with fencing all the time for species including bear, deer, and geese so he can appreciate the comments regarding the gardens. In relation to NRCS Fish Passage 396 – they do 90% of the beaver blasting in the state. He then gave a quick update on projects they currently have ongoing with Tribes. They are currently working with Bad River on a piping plover project, helping with predator control, and on developing an MOU as it relates to wolf research. Wildlife Services has tie in with BIA to help get funds for wolf management plans. For LCO, they have a wolf MOU in place. They have also been working with LCO and St. Croix on bear issues. They have been working with Red Cliff on a deer removal project on Sand and York Island. Since October they have removed about 100 animals between the two islands. They worked with Mole Lake on beaver damage management as it relates to protection of wild rice and a lot of beaver damage management as it relates to wild rice for GLIFWC. They have been assisting Ho-Chunk in an effort to try to capture wolves. They have been providing technical assistance to Menominee as it relates to beaver management. He indicated that they frequently visit with the Voight Task Force.

7. Small Grants

Nate handed out financial report and indicated that Bad River's culvert project would come in way under budget so we will still have \$9,483.97 left in the bank account for a small project. We are looking for a small project at the next meeting for approximately \$9,483.97. The money will go to the Tribe that applies which has received the least small grant funding previously.

8. WTCAC EQIP/WHIP Sign Up

Jerry is working on an SOP for this.

9. GLRI WHIP Funds Request

Do we really have a need? Ho-Chunk, St. Croix, and LCO are not in the basin. There is word that GLRI is going to be cut significantly next year primarily because of other stimulus funds given out since it was approved.

10. 2501 Grant

We received \$300,000 for 1 year so we were given \$80,000 more for one year than we had budgeted for. We will need to adjust the budget upward. We will schedule a conference call to discuss this.

Official Meeting with State Conservationist as a Technical Committee

Pat Leavenworth gave a plaque to Tom Cogger as he is retiring and indicated that he was there from the beginning of WTCAC. Thanked him for everything and indicated that he devoted 30 years of his life to the US Government. He also received the WI Civil Rights award for outstanding contributions to outreach to underserved in the state of WI. He was presented with a crystal ball award as his name goes on a plaque that hangs at the USDA office.

Tom said that WTCAC took awhile to get going and has been very interested to see this group grow. He thinks we are now functioning well and he has enjoyed his time working with NRCS and Tribes.

Presentation of Tech Recommendations

Jonathan went through each item.

- 1) Dockets for Tribes
 - a. **NRCS has decided that a separate docket is very appropriate and they will be setting it up for the next round.**
- 2) Concern with Technical Support
 - a. They will be meeting in July to look at their staffing plan going forward. She would like to consult with us on how they could tweak the position to help the Tribes more. She indicated that it has been a pleasure to see how we have come into our own and she wants to see what other things they can do to enhance the Tribal programs.
 - b. Jonathan indicated that the Harmony Training is important to get the new people up to speed on Tribes.

- c. Julie Malvitz's position has been filled by Michael Stinebrink who had been in Merrill. He will be starting soon.
- 3) 5 and 6 go with this one. Jonathan gave an overview of why this meets resource concerns and Tribal needs.
 - a. They met this morning and went through these. Matt Otto indicated that they are trying to find resource concerns that fit with them. They want to communicate with national office on where they see it fits in, if they get the go ahead they would like to include it in a suite of things for 2012 including pump house, well, etc. He indicated that it would be a good idea to pull them all together being they work together.
 - b. Need to also discussed a scenario under Fish Pond Management for cleaning out of the ponds
- 4) There was a correction of \$218.50/linear foot of culvert
 - a. This should not be a problem and can add it for 2011
- 5) Goes with #3
- 6) Goes with #3
- 7) This should not be a problem.
- 8) Fence – 382 – They think they can do the barrier without problem. They will look into fencing options for wildlife.
- 9) It is not a problem to put Fish Passage into EQIP. They averaged it and made one scenario for this past year.
- 10) Proposing that Invasive Controls be added under standards 644, 645, and 666. Pat Murphy said there is a new standard where this would fit in well. Herbaceous Plant Control is a brand new national standard and he is working on adopting it for WI, thought these would fit very well there.
- 11) Same as #10
- 12) Same as #10

Follow up on last year

- 2) Done
- 3) He thinks it was just an oversight and it will be included in 2011.
- 4) Done
- 5) Ran into an issue in that you need to have an existing irrigation system, this is a program requirement. The Tribe would need to have irrigation occurring 2 out of the past 5 years to be used.
- 6) There is no Microirrigation Scenario currently available. Same as #5
- 7) Done
- 8) A) This may be grouped into Fish Pond scenario as discussed above.

9) This could fall into many applications, irrigation, aquaculture, etc. This would also fit into fish ponds. Our own cookbook for WTCAC would really help out.

10) Done

11) New standard (discussed above) should take care of these issues. Still may need to work out issue around multi-year payments. NRCS needs to look into the new standard to see if they can make more than 1 payment on a piece of property.

12) There is an issue with livestock only, could be included in Fish Pond Suite of practices.

Jonathan indicated that if they need any additional information or justification please let WTCAC know what we can do to help. In the future we may want to look 2 years out to give NRCS time to develop scenarios, cost rates, etc. Winter (January) would be a better time for these types of meetings. Major standard requirements may still take 2 years.

They just called the hearing for the next Farm Bill that is several years out.

Pat Leavenworth said it is good to be back, Office of Advocacy and Outreach is what she was working on. Office of Tribal Relations is in the same floor as the Office of Advocacy and Outreach.

They have not heard about the honor award yet.

Conservation Stewardship Program – The new Statewide Coordinator spoke. They currently have a 2nd 2010 signup ongoing. Any producers nationwide can apply for the program. The challenge with the program is that the applicant has to enroll entire agricultural acreage. All forest land would have to be enrolled. The program awards producers who are already doing good conservation but they agree to do additional things. WTCAC should put him on agenda in the future.