

WTCAC Meeting
March 21, 2002

Meeting called to order at 10:45 a.m. by Chairman Jean Buffalo-Reyes

Joe Miller – Stockbridge-Munsee representative welcomed group on behalf of Tribal Council.

Roll call – LCO, Stockbridge-Munsee, Bad River, Oneida, Ho-Chunk, Menominee, and Red Cliff present, GLIFWC (teleconference)

Minutes motion to approve by Oneida, 2nd by Stockbridge-Munsee, Approved

Introductions:

Review Letter: Jean re-submitted the WTCAC Farm Bill language to all the Senators and Congressmen by fax, and called a number of them. Will be following up again tomorrow.

Jim Thannum reported on Legislative activity. All Bill's approval is moving very fast on the Hill due to this being an election year. Contact staffers about meeting with Congressional members when they might be meeting. Staffers get work divided up between them. Need to identify the proper staffer for Indian issues, Agricultural issues, Environmental issues. Want to get as many people there as possible. Senate wants letters addressing specific earmarks by March 22nd. Have a dual process going on right now. Have the Farm Bill discussion going on as well as 2003 appropriations. One area that is slated for removal is the PL-566 Small Watershed Program. Forest Incentive, WRP and WHIP are also proposed to be eliminated by the Administration. **Make the point that programs may be authorized, but they are not being funded, at a critical time when Tribes are in need of them.** In the Power Point presentation address the Government to Government relationship and the Trust responsibilities. **Research statements made by current Administrative staff as to commitment of Govt to Govt relations.** **Identify the history of Government to Tribal relationships.** Have Pat Leavenworth identify the proper people to contact in DC. Pat recommends contacting Mark Rey, Under-Secretary for NRCS and Forest Service. Jerry Thompson recommends also contacting NRCS National Tribal Liaison Jack Bricker. Jim recommends that a letter and information also be sent to the Tribal Chairs and Business Committees so that they are aware of WTCAC efforts. Communication should be through faxes, emails and direct contact.

Pat Leavenworth reported on her last four day in DC meeting with and working with the NACD. Congressional budget office found a \$6 billion dollar error in the Senate Bill. House bill 15 billion, Senate bill 21 billion. If Farm Bill doesn't get done this week, then it will be too late to implement a farm bill. Talk went to doing an emergency supplemental, which usually hurts NRCS because it does not focus on conservation. Late on Wednesday a compromise was reached of \$17.1 billion that would go to conservation, above base funding. Pat met with Obey and Green, as well as their staffs, about the Tribal issues. Big emphasis on Working Lands Conservation, but no specific targets for individual programs. Pat will give names to Jean the names of the staffers who are working on the Farm Bill. Local staffers need to be put on WTCAC mailing list. Farm Bill Conference that was scheduled for Friday, has been cancelled and everyone is going on a two week break. Gerald Danforth and Kevin Cornelius, met with Combest and Feingold and they agreed to keep Tribal language in the Farm Bill. MAST will be in DC April 7th to the 10th and Roger has asked for information about issues to lobby on.