

WTCAC Minutes

Thursday, March 24, 2005

Lake of the Torches Casino & Convention Center

Sokagon Meeting Room

Lac Du Flambeau, Wisconsin

Meeting called to order at 10:05 a.m. by committee President Jean Buffalo-Reyes, who welcomed members and other participants. President Buffalo-Reyes also expressed condolences to the Red Lake Tribe of Minnesota who recently experienced a tragedy on their reservation and asked for a moment of silence and prayer.

Roll call: by President Buffalo-Reyes:

Present: Red Cliff, Sokagon, Lac Courte Orielles, Lac Du Flambeau, Menominee, Stockbridge Munsee, St. Croix, Ho Chunk, Forest County Potawatomi, Bad River, Oneida

Absent: Great Lakes Indian Fish and Wildlife Commission

Approval of minutes for December 9, 2004, motion by Oneida, seconded by Menominee, motion carried.

Biomass Project: Presenters were: Steve Kluess of Laurentian RC&D and John Howard, Gene Zentz Indigenous Energy Partners. Indigenous Energy Partners LLC's Mission Statement: Developing joint venture relationships between the American Indian Community and the American Business Community. The presentation discussed alternative sources to incinerators and alternate uses and production of energy, to help provide sustainable green energy; also to provide businesses on tribal lands.

MACPRA 106 Process: Cecil Pavlat, MACPRA Chair, the presenter, stated that this is a spiritual task. Formed in 2000, this committee consists of 14 tribes in Michigan, and are empowered to speak on their behalf regarding issues pertaining to repatriation. Also, to aid in the repatriation of those who have or will have issues. One of their goals is to establish a working relationship with local and state governments.

Pat Leavenworth introduced Merlin Bartz, who is NRCS Regional Assistant Chief. Mr. Bartz gave a brief overview of his history in working with the Native American community before coming to NRCS. Mr. Bartz oversees the area on federal biomass research and demonstration; noted that there is 75 million available for federal biomass and demonstration funds. NEPA (National Environmental Protection Agency) is also looking to work in collaboration with the American Indian Communities.

Pat Leavenworth acknowledged Pete Lindgren who will be retiring as of April 1, 2005. Mr. Lindgren was presented with a plaque and the thanks of NRCS for all his work.

WHIP FY2005:

Motion by Menominee to accept ranking sheets, seconded by Mole Lake. Comment: Can't spend EQIP monies on Stockbridge-Munsee private land – easement knapweed, medicinal plants. WHIP is small money, may not help much, EQIP maybe used for pest management funding at \$4/acre. Need to talk to state technical committee regarding aquatic invasive. Motion passed unanimously.

FY2005 WHIP project summary: Correction to Mole Lake, \$6667 total of \$5000 cost share, discussions by tribes.

Bad River: No projects planned for FY2005.

Forest County Potawatomi: Wetland Wildlife Habitat Management 644; Wildlife Upland Habitat Management 645; Pond restoration; WHIP funds will be used to enhance nesting opportunities by a wide variety of species. These nesting areas for the various species will need to develop technical notes, just like for wild rice; \$5,000.00

Ho-Chunk Nation: No projects planned for FY2005.

Lac Du Flambeau: No projects planned for FY2005

Menominee: Stream habitat Improvement & Management 395; Placing 700 ft of underwater structure for fish; \$4,350.00

Oneida: Stream habitat Improvement & Management 395; Silver creek, Resotre the natural stream morphology and reestablish the riparian wetlands in what is now an excavated pond constructed within the original stream channel total cost \$12,600; funds \$6,300 and BIA contribution \$6,300.

Red Cliff: No projects planned for FY2005

Sokaogon: Wetland development or restoration 597; The ongoing wild rice restoration in Rice Lake has focused on (1) removing flow obstructions on tributaries to Rice Lake. (2) removing competing plant species of lilies and cattails. (3) planting wild rice. This whip project will under take steps two and three on 11.1 acres of wild rice wetland restoration in the southeastern part of Rice Lake.

LCO: requesting money to help improve brook trout fishing also to help with beaver trapping; \$7,500.00

St. Croix: brush management 314; prescribed burning 338; The project consists of restoring 11.9 acres of Jack/White Pine/Native grasses back to a pine barren habitat. These practices willa Iso reinvigorate berry production with the prescribed burning; \$4,573.00

Stockbridge Munsee: Wetland Wildlife Habitat Management 644; Building and placing 100 wood duck nest boxes along the Red River; \$4,000.00. Upland Wildlife Habitat Management 645; planting 10 acre of cool season grasses for wildlife forage; \$850.00

Tom Cogger gave a presentation regarding the 3 options for potential ways for WHIP sign-up. Suggested sending options to tribes and have comments available for next meeting.

So far there are \$19,250 in uncommitted funds as of March 23, 2005. Motion to pass with noted changes by Bad River, Ho-Chunk seconded, motion carried.

EQIP Program 2005:

Tony Bush of NRCS discussed ranking sheet for EQIP 2005 program. Also asked liaisons to come up with new ideas for projects. Some of those projects included:

Bad River: Nothing at this time.

Forest County Potawatomi: Forest access road

Ho-Chunk: Inventory of land

Lac Courte Oreilles: 5 boat landings, pest management on Chippewa Flowage, shaping and seeking

Lac Du Flambeau: Road improvement, prescribed burn, timber stand improvement

Menominee: Eurasian mill foil, EQIP cost-share; seeding project for landfill, boat landing improvements

Red Cliff: Nothing at this time.

St. Croix: Pest management of aquatic plants

Sokagon: Construction for new fish hatchery

Stockbridge Munsee: forest road planting, black locust logging road project/plant management; firebreak in white pine growth; water control project; forest road stream crossing

Oneida: ATV access road; closure wasteland

Timeframe for putting ranking sheets together, projects information should be done in time for the next WTCAC meeting. Discussion also led to adding ponds to EQIP list; a letter will be drafted and sent to NRCS regarding this addition; another letter regarding controlling pest plant management to include private land to help with invasive projects.

Discussion regarding WTCAC and NRCS agreement:

1. WTCAC will assist tribes with pilot conservation projects not authorized by WHIP or EQIP
2. Assist tribes in organizing and sponsoring an indigenous farming conference in 2006, suggested that it be held at Oneida because of the centralization and amenities.
3. Implement tribal cultural resource for Section 106 Consultation Process by Sept. 30, 2006 in cooperation with NRCS Cultural Resources Specialist
4. Organize and sponsor four (4) workshops addressing unique tribal conservation needs
5. Request reimbursement no more than quarterly by submitting a completed form SF-270. Request for Advance or Reimbursement with supporting documentation to NRCS. Advance payments may be made available for anticipated costs for the next 30-calendar day period by submitting a completed SF-270. Requests will include a certification that the funds requested are necessary to meet planned activities and will be utilized within 30-calendar days as well as a certification that there is an adequate system in place to track the used advanced funds. It is further understood that NRCS will not be charged any overhead expenditures relative to the agreement.
6. Organize and sponsor five (5) pilot projects

Date set for next Executive Board meeting to discuss the agreement for April 19, 2006 in Wausau Wisconsin.

Suggestions for the next meeting will be at Mole Lake on June 23, 2005 or plan b) Stockbridge Munsee with a confirmation of meeting date and time.

Motion to adjourn by Oneida seconded by Ho-Chunk. Meeting adjourned at 4:20 p.m.