

Wisconsin Tribal Advisory Council Meeting
8/23/01

Called to order at 1:36 p.m.

Introductions

Tribal Representatives

Michelle Connors	Bad River Tribe, Box 39, Odanah, WI 54861	mickicon@badriver.com
Rae Ann Maday	Bad River Nat. Res., Box 39, Odanah, WI 54861	madayrae@badrive.com
Pat Cornelius	Oneida Nation Farm, N6010 Cty Rd C, Seymour, WI 54165	FARM@oneidanation.org
Pat Pelky	Oneida Env. Dept. P.O. Box 365, Oneida, WI 54155	ppelky1@oneidanation.org
Ritchie Brown	Ho-Chunk Nation, P.O. Box 725, Black River Falls, WI	rbrown@ho-chunk.com
Beth Greiff	St. Croix Nat. Res., P.O. Box 45287, Hertel, WI 54872	stcrxnrđ@sirentel.net
Jim Thannum	GLIFWC, P.O. Box 9, Odanah, WI 54861	jthannum@glifwc.org

Agency Representative

Pat Leavenworth	NRCS, 6515 Watts Road, Suite 200, Madison, WI 53719	pat.leavenworth@wi.usda.gov
Dave Carvey	NRCS, 2820 Walton Common West #123, Madison	dcarvey@mw.nrcs.usda.gov
Jim Radke	NRCS, 220 Airport Road, Viroqua, WI 54665	james.radke@wi.usda.gov
Dan Chroninger	NRCS, 220 Airport Road, Viroqua, WI 54665	dan.chroninger@wi.usda.gov
Tom Cogger	NRCS, P.O. Box 267, Ashland, WI 54806	tom.cogger@wi.usda.gov
Jerry Thompson	NRCS, 3759 Mason St. Box 365, Oneida, WI 54155	jerry.thompson@wi.usda.gov

Announcements

Jean Buffalo-Reyes was not re-elected to Tribal Chairman of the Red Cliff. New Chairman assumed duties in July.

Tribes represented at meeting: Oneida, Bad River, St. Croix, Ho-Chunk

Minutes from last meeting approved by consensus with change of Dan Croninger from a Tribal representative to a NRCS representative.

Farm Bill Discussion

Dave Carvey opened the discussion with the statement that officially NRCS does not have a position on the Farm Bill, as the Administration has not taken a position on the Farm Bill. Programs currently proposed for the farm bill will require a substantial amount of technical assistance that does not appear to have adequate funding. There is not much of a Tribal voice in Washington conveying Tribal needs. The specific needs of Tribes have to be identified by the Tribes and conveyed effectively to the legislators so that the language gets in the bills.

Pat Pelky distributed handouts developed by the Oneida Sustainable Resource Advisory Council (OSRAC) that analyzed the Kind Bill and the Agriculture Committee Bill in relation to Tribal needs. Pros and Cons were discussed and questions arose as to the impact the two proposals would have on Indian Country. Of the two, the Kind Bill seems to be the most workable for Tribes, while the Agriculture Committee Bill would have a devastating effect on Tribes participating in USDA programs. He also distributed a "Draft" Tribal Title to the Farm Bill.

Pat Cornelius stated that it appears the emphasis on the Agriculture Committee bill is to focus on commodity programs to large operations, and the conservation efforts that Tribes have brought forward will now be a low priority. Appears to be a movement away from the small farm operation that practiced conservation to a corporate farm subsidy program.

Jim Thannum stated that he sees a movement away from the conservation efforts of USDA to a structure supporting commodity programs. This would result in less assistance in Northern Wisconsin to Tribes and small farmers as USDA staff is moved to areas where they can service the needs of the larger farming operations in other States. He distributed reports from the Farm Bill Network that substantiated the fact that the House Agriculture Committee Bill HR2646 would have a detrimental effect on actual environmental efforts as technical assistance funding is reduced and the Farm Service Agency becomes the primary provider of technical assistance. Another Farm Bill Network report supports OSRAC's findings that Representative Kind's Bill, HR2375 Working Lands Stewardship Act of 2001, is more supportive of conservation efforts. He also handed out, for discussion, a Tribal Strategy for impacting the Farm Bill process.

WTCAC members agreed that the next step would be to draft a "letter of concern" about the House Agr. Bill and a "letter of support" for the Kind Bill and have all Members of WTCAC review it before Jean Buffalo-Reyes sends it to Washington. Pat Pelky agreed to receive comments from the WTCAC membership and to draft the letter for Jean. Also agreed that one resolution, stating WTCAC's position, should be developed for all Tribal Chairman's to sign. WTCAC members are to brief their Tribal Leadership on this issue and identify Tribal Leaders who can take the message to Washington. Jean is to contact Representative Kind and offer Tribal assistance supporting his bill and also contact the Secretary of Agriculture informing her of the Tribal concerns. Similar letters should go out to every Wisconsin legislator with a cc copy to Representative Kind, Ross Racine and Harlan Beaulieu of the Inter-Tribal Agriculture Council.

Meeting adjourned at 4:30 p.m.