



Southwest Tribal Fisheries Commission

Quarterly Meeting / Isleta Resort Casino – Albuquerque, NM / January 14, 2009

Meeting Convened at approx. 9:15 AM

Membership Attendance (Tribe / Rep)

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|------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 1. Mescalero Apache Tribe | Butch Blazer (Chairman) |
| 2. Southern Ute Tribe | Steve Whiteman (Secretary-Treasurer) |
| 3. San Carlos Apache Tribe | Harold Nofchissey |
| 4. Navajo Nation | Viola Willetto |
| 5. Isleta Pueblo | Jackie Keryte |
| 6. Zuni Pueblo | Nelson Luna |
| 7. Sandia Pueblo | John Hulkonen |
| 8. Santa Clara Pueblo | Gilbert Gutierrez |
| 9. Pyramid Lake Paiute Tribe | Not present |
| 10. Jicarilla Apache Nation | Not present |
| 11. Cochiti Pueblo | Not present |
| 12. Laguna Pueblo | Not present |
| 13. Okay Owingeh | Not present |
| 14. Picuris Pueblo | Not present |
| 15. Ute Tribe (U&O) | Not present |

Other Attendees:

Mike Montoya, SWTFC/Mescalero Apache Tribal Fish Hatchery (MTFH)
 Carlos Trujillo, Isleta Lakes
 Joseph Chavarria, Santa Clara Pueblo
 Michael Bridges, Sandia Pueblo Lakes Director
 Jeffery McFadden, San Carlos Rec & Wildlife
 Daniel Juan, San Carlos Rec & Wildlife
 Joe Jojola, BIA Southwest Regional Office
 Lawrence Abeita, BIA Southern Pueblos Agency
 Norman Jojola, BIA Northern Pueblos Agency
 Jennifer Smith, BIA Mescalero Agency
 Jim Brooks, USFWS ABQ Fish & Wildlife Conservation Office
 Chris Kitcheyan, USFWS ABQ Fish & Wildlife Conservation Office
 Pete Stine, USFWS (retired)

Welcome / Opening Comments (Mike Montoya)

Secretary / Treasurer Report (Steve Whiteman)

Past Minutes and Financial Status:

Steve presented the November 12th 2008 quarterly meeting minutes for approval
 Per usual procedure, the minutes were emailed and posted following last meeting; no corrections submitted
 Motion for approval of past minutes from Nelson Luna, with 2nd from John Hulkonen; Approved by consensus
 Last reported bank account balance (from October 24, 2008 bank statement) was \$22,061.67
 Current balance (from most recent statement, December 23, 2008) is \$33,677.27 for a *net increase* of \$11,615.60

Total expenditures included:	NM State Reg. Commission	10.00	(Annual non-profit corporation renewal fee)
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Total deposits included:	Interest on CD	8,180.60	(Principal invested was MTFH "feed/fuel" funds)
	2008 NAFWS Fundraiser	1,545.00	(SW Regional Conference auction, Flagstaff AZ)
	Jicarilla Apache Nation	1,500.00	
	SUIT Membership	300.00	
	Isleta Membership	100.00	
	TOTAL Deposits	+ \$11,625.60	

Chairman Report (Butch Blazer)

Butch serves as 1 of 2 reps for SW NAFWS; Butch gave update on NAFWS BOD meeting, conference plans
Butch considers SWTFC and SW NAFWS to be similar organizations; similar objectives and similar participants

NAFWS Conference Planning

Preliminary planning for NAFWS 2009 SW conference is underway; Isleta Pueblo is considered a potential host
A lot of positive feedback on 2008 conference in Flagstaff; will try to continue this success in 2009
A concern was brought up about timing of the conference in August and overlap with some pueblo ceremonies
The group seemed to agree that July 27th – 30th looks like a good possibility, in consideration of pueblo ceremonies
Anyone interested in helping with conference planning, talk with Butch about joining the planning team
Agenda is being developed for NAFWS national conference, to be held in Juneau, AK, Sun May 17- Fri May 22
See NAFWS website (<http://www.nafws.org/>) for more information on conference and other NAFWS news
Butch would like to convene a panel in Juneau to discuss anticipated changes with Obama administration
Juneau panel will be tasked with identifying ways to raise awareness of Native American fish and wildlife issues
A tribal meeting is planned soon in DC w/Obama transition team
Butch is concerned that NA fish/wildlife is not on the agenda; will push to have NAFWS represented at DC meeting

NAFWS & NA Fish & Wildlife Foundation Dispute

NAFWS leadership has long struggled over a financial conflict with the NA Fish & Wildlife Foundation
Foundation holds significant funds on behalf of NAFWS but has “gone its own way”
NAFWS wants money back; principal+accrued interest is now in excess of \$300K
Dispute went to court in Colorado (HQ of NAFWS) in 2008
Agreement was recently reached between NAFWS and Foundation; lawsuit to be dropped and money returned
Agreement dictates that the principal can't be spent, but interest may be used as originally planned - to help tribes
Three objectives of the Agreement between NAFWS and the Foundation are as follows:

- A. To transfer all Foundation assets to NAFWS for use consistent with original, intended use
- B. To dissolve Foundation and distribute assets to NAFWS
- C. To resolve and dismiss the Foundation lawsuit

The assets (i.e., interest funds only) may be used by NAFWS for the following purposes (as defined in Agreement):

- A. To advance tribal natural resource projects and programs;
- B. To provide grant awards to tribal programs for fish, wildlife, rec, enforcement, and new programs
- C. To fund education and training assistance programs, workshops, conferences in fish, wildlife, rec, etc.
- D. To provide scholarship/career development opportunities to NA students pursuing nat. res. degrees
- E. To provide grants for the development and maintenance of the summer youth practicums
- F. To administer a match/challenge grants program to secure max. funding for tribal nat. res. programs
- G. For other charitable, scientific, cultural, educational purpose deemed appropriate by NAFWS

Butch acknowledged the assistance of Norman Jojola in reaching the agreement between NAFWS and Foundation
Butch expects that a full accounting of funds, as well as the agreement, will be provided at next SWTFC meeting

Executive Director Report (Mike Montoya)

Equipment Purchase

Mike explained need and intent to purchase equipment in collaboration with Mescalero Apache Tribe (MAT)
The equipment is a new Caterpillar 279 track-skidsteer w/grapppler attachment and hauling trailer
Approximately \$68K purchase price for the skidsteer, grapppler, and hauling trailer; will be at GSA discounted rate
The intent is for SWTFC to purchase the equipment to assist tribes with on-the-ground projects, esp. stream projects
The skidsteer will be extremely helpful for flood damage cleanup at MTFH and other MAT natural resource projects
SWTFC/MAT's available “feed/fuel” funds for the hatchery will be used; SWTFC will hold title to the equipment
A rental arrangement with MAT DNR is also being worked out with Thora Padilla (MAT DNR Director)
MAT rental fees will help recover the expenditure made out of the feed/fuel account
Highest priority in 2009 will be on MAT lands (Rio Ruidoso cleanup); soonest available to other tribes will be 2010
Equipment will be housed at MTFH and made available to member tribes for use on tribal projects
Mike to take responsibility for basic maintenance, and only skilled operators would be allowed to use equipment
More information on the equipment will be posted on the SWTFC website; can contact Mike as well.

New Mexico Wildlife Conservation Strategy

This is the State wildlife management planning process required to become eligible for federal funding support
Mike described 4 regional forums in NM between now and Feb, sponsored by New Mexico Game & Fish Dept.
According to Joe Jojola, an effort is underway to setup a separate forum specifically for tribes in March/April

Tribes may attend the planning process with the State; Mike and Butch strongly recommend tribal participation Provides opportunity to exchange information with the State, identify projects and partnering opportunities Butch believes this can open up opportunities for State funding of projects on Indian lands Gilbert (Santa Clara) suggested that Tribe-State MOA's should be considered in these discussions on cooperation He also suggested that Secretary Alvin Warren of the NM Dept. of Indian Affairs should participate in the meeting

MTFH Operations Update

Currently, there are no excess fish on-station due to flood losses; Mike expects to meet tribal demand in '09 though MAT has received Fed/State funding to support development of Sovereign Nations Youth Conservation Corp Program will be held at MTFH, with housing provided to students. Mike to oversee program. Contact Mike for more details; he wants to accommodate tribal youth, 16-24, with interest in NR management Mike can provide more information on the State YCC program that is available to Tribes – contact him.

Western Native Trout Initiative (Jim Brooks, FWS)

[Several handouts provided by Jim, PPT Slides, WNTI Strategic Plan, WNTI Organization/Operation] WNTI is one of many efforts recognized under the National Fish Habitat Action Plan (NFHAP) WNTI covers a vast area of the western United States, including Alaska WNTI goals are to protect, restore, and enhance western native trout and habitat through collaboration, partnerships Jim strongly encourages Tribal participation in WNTI; Funding proposed for WNTI projects in 2009 is \$600K The current focus of WNTI is on staffing various committees and forming partnerships A challenge for tribes is working with the Western Association of Fish & Wildlife Agencies (WAFWA=States) According to Jim, WAFWA exerts very strong influence over funding decisions (i.e., strong state bias) The Santa Clara Pueblo project ranked very highly as a WNTI project in New Mexico benefitting RGC The WNTI Steering Committee is mostly un-staffed at present; tribal representation needs to step up now We will need to push WAFWA hard to accept tribal representation on Committee This is a 13-member Committee, 9 of which are state representatives (mostly state game/fish chiefs) Jim wants to work in a coordinated manner with SWTFC to identify a Tribal rep (and others?) to sit on Committee Recruiting effort needs to be conducted with tribes throughout the entire western region due to WNTI extent However, the majority of western native cutthroat trout populations and conservation issues are in the southwest This coordinated effort between SWTFC and FWS would be consistent under the recent cooperative MOU See <http://westernnativetrout.org/> for more information on WNTI Jim sees strong potential for increasing native trout project funding on tribal lands, but tribal voice is critical We're not facing any deadline to identify a tribal rep; there is time for a thorough search Meetings are twice per year to discuss projects: July and December. Conference calls monthly to every 3 months Travel to meetings by participants is likely to be paid for by WNTI WNTI focuses largely on evaluating native trout projects, sharing information on cross-jurisdiction mgmt, etc. Among the SWTFC reps present, there is consensus that SWTFC should support tribal participation in WNTI Butch proposes that SWTFC and NAFWS work together in this process of locating interested tribal rep(s) Those SWTFC reps who would like to help with recruiting a WNTI rep will need to meet to discuss strategy A strategy for recruiting a WNTI rep will be presented at SWTFC's annual meeting in April

Santa Clara Pueblo Rio Grande Cutthroat Project Update (Joe/Gilbert)

Joe described history of fish management on Santa Clara Creek, leading to planning of RGC restoration project Santa Clara was successful with WNTI grant award; thorough surveys and fish collections began in 2008 Collected RGC have been housed at MTFH and are doing well Santa Clara worked closely with FWS on preparing a Fish Management Plan (approved by Council) RGC fishery may eventually be opened to public as a destination/trophy fishery (for revenue generation) Still waiting on genetic purity results of Santa Clara Creek RGC This has been a cooperative effort between Santa Clara, SWTFC, FWS, and State; strong success Long-term outlook may include development of a Santa Clara fish hatchery (similar to MTFH)

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service Update (Chris Kitcheyan)

Chris reports that tests are NEGATIVE for cutthroat trout virus at William's Cr-Alchesay NFH; stocking to resume FWS R2 is taking position that R2 fed hatcheries will NOT acquire eggs from CTV+ sources, including Ennis NFH Many NFH egg orders cancelled as a result of the R2 CTV policy (which happens to vary with other FWS regions) Chris expects minor impact to FWS deliveries to tribes; one result will be lateness with fish deliveries early in 2009. Although not a fed hatchery, Mike at MTFH will find an alternative, CTV-negative egg source (i.e., not Ennis NFH) Mike brought up the issue of FWS R2's position on CTV versus the position of other FWS regions CTV does not appear to be a significant management concern in other western FWS regions, and is not restricted Mike also questioned R2's logic since eggs from CTV+ sources still come in to non-federal hatcheries (e.g., State) Chris and Jim say R2 wants to err on side of caution when it comes to fish health; therefore firm policy remains

Meeting reminders:

42nd annual joint meeting of AZ-NM chapters of AFS/Wildlife Society in Gallup, Feb 2009

American Fisheries Society / Western Division annual meeting Albuquerque, May 2009

Chris strongly encourages tribal participation in Western Division meeting; a tribal symposium would be ideal

U.S. Bureau of Indian Affairs Update (Joe Jojola)

Another request has been received from MTFH for BIA hatchery/maintenance funding; will keep group posted

Joe is working to organize a tribal training (with APHIS) in first week of April on wildlife disease management

Disease management training will be at White Mountain, no fees, limited to 25 participants

Butch asked about training cost; estimated at approx \$500. Butch says NAFWS funds are available for this.

Gilbert and Viola asked about opportunities for training in electrofishing, as well as basic fishery techniques

NCTC is strong, but very "book" or classroom oriented. A hands-on training in practical applications might be best

Jim and Steve suggested that the 1997 tribal-FWS training at Santa Ana was a very effective "hands-on" training

Basic field fisheries techniques could be a several-day program on its own. Also, possibly a NAFWS workshop?

Chris will send the agenda used at Santa Ana training to Steve; Steve to distribute to group for further consideration

Meeting adjourned at 12:30 PM

Next Meeting:

SWTFC Annual BOD Meeting – Friday, April 24th 2009 (Time TBD)

BIA Southwest Regional Office / Albuquerque, New Mexico

Next Meeting discussion topics (preliminary):

1. *** Election of Vice Chairman ***
2. Update on WNTI Tribal Rep recruiting strategy
3. NAFWS Conference Planning
4. Fisheries Field Techniques Workshop planning
5. NAFWS-NAFW Foundation; settlement/agreement copies and funds accounting

Meeting Minutes taken by:

Steve Whiteman, Secretary-Treasurer

Southwest Tribal Fisheries Commission

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