



# Southwest Tribal Fisheries Commission

Quarterly Meeting / BIA Southwest Regional Office – ABQ, NM / Oct. 30, 2009

**Meeting Convened at approx. 9:20 AM**

## **Membership Attendance (Tribe / Rep)**

1. Mescalero Apache Tribe	Arthur "Butch" Blazer (Chairman)
2. Jicarilla Apache Nation	Kevin Terry (Vice-Chairman)
3. Southern Ute Tribe	Steve Whiteman (Secretary-Treasurer)
4. Santa Clara Pueblo	Joseph Mark Chavarria
5. Ohkay Owingeh	Lawrence Cata
6. Laguna Pueblo	Adam Ringia
7. Isleta Pueblo	Jackie Keryte
8. Nambe Pueblo***	Not present
9. Zuni Pueblo	Not present
10. Cochiti Pueblo	Not present
11. Sandia Pueblo	Not present
12. Picuris Pueblo	Not present
13. Navajo Nation	Not present
14. Ute Tribe (U&O)	Not present
15. San Carlos Apache Tribe	Not present
16. Pyramid Lake Paiute Tribe	Not present

\*\*\* New member tribe

## **Other Attendees:**

Mike Montoya, SWTFC/Mescalero Apache Tribal Fish Hatchery (MTFH)  
Chris Kitcheyan, FWS ABQ Fish & Wildlife Conservation Office  
Norman Jojola, BIA Northern Pueblos Agency  
Jennifer Smith, BIA Mescalero Agency  
Gilbert Gutierrez, Santa Clara Pueblo  
Carlos Trujillo, Isleta Lakes

## **Welcome / Opening Comments (Mike Montoya)**

### **Secretary / Treasurer Report (Steve Whiteman)**

Past Minutes and Financial Status:

Steve presented the July 27<sup>th</sup> 2009 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: Kevin Terry, with 2<sup>nd</sup> from Joseph Chavarria; Approved by consensus

Last reported bank account balance (from July 23 bank statement) was \$33,877.27

Current balance (from most recent statement, October 26, 2009) is \$33,877.27 for a net change of \$0.00

Total Payments included: [None] 0.00

Total Deposits included: [None] 0.00

### **Executive Director Report (Mike Montoya)**

Mike reported on operations at Mescalero Tribal Fish Hatchery (MTFH)

Fish production is at 100% and exceeding past production by FWS

Unlike past years, no flooding problems have occurred in 2009

Mike is working to make space for taking on fish being transferred from FWS/Alchesay NFH

FWS is paying for fish and feed that otherwise would be going to Alchesay (if not for water problems there)

Mike is having some challenges with survival rates for transferred fish; stress of transport may be problem

Mike says that transferred fish initially require very low-density, but density can be gradually increased over time

Mike proposes that if raising FWS fish for tribes at MTFH is successful, maybe MTFH could continue this in future  
A possible concern is if contracting FWS fish to MTFH would be an issue for WMAT (i.e., “taking their fish”)  
Mike clarified that he envisions federal allocation of eggs directly to MTFH, *not taking* fish from Alchey/WMAT  
If approved, this could lead to better equity in allocation of federal fish for southwest tribes  
Meeting attendees seemed generally supportive of continuing discussion of this idea  
Suggestion was made that we need to speak more with Mike Oetker (FWS) about the contracting possibility  
However, Chris K. re-iterated FWS concern about water hardness issues at MTFH. Need to work on this issue.

Mike said that a FWS expert will be helping to evaluate/restore the non-operational water re-circ system at MTFH  
Native fish re-circulation system is expected to be back online at MTFH by Christmas (with FWS assistance)  
Chris K. recommends that the native fish rearing facility be set up to mimic a natural system for better conditioning  
Mike agrees with recommendation, but indicates first priority is to simply restore the plumbing for the system  
Kevin suggests we need more information from Angela James (FWS) on how to better hold wild fish at MTFH

Mike indicates that Mescalero fire crew has moved out of housing at MTFH; SWTFC has moved into a new office  
Buildings at MTFH are serving multiple programs/needs, but now includes dedicated SWTFC office space  
Butch asked about furniture/office equipment status for new SWTFC office  
Excess property is meeting much of the need, however, some new purchases are needed (a new computer server)

Mike indicates that a new SWTFC membership resolution has been approved/received for Nambe Pueblo  
SWTFC now stands at 16 member tribes

Butch asked about condition of vehicles/stocking equipment  
Mike reports usual wear-tear on equipment, and maintenance work is needed. Garage area is now available for this.

Mike pointed out that financial difficulties at MAT are having an impact on his salary as a tribal employee  
He is now receiving half of his original salary level; this issue, and possible solutions, will be discussed by the BOD  
One possible avenue to cover Mike’s salary shortfall is to use MTFH feed/fuel funds.

#### **Chairman Report (Butch Blazer)**

Butch discussed current economic difficulties facing tribes and their programs  
Butch emphasized that tribes need to continue to work together, e.g., for SWTFC and NAFWS  
One of Butch’s goals is to see improved intertribal cooperation at a national level on tribal natural resource issues  
Butch discussed a recent summit-meeting in Idaho of recognized tribal officials to discuss tribal challenges  
A follow-up meeting is being planned for Denver, and will include other influential tribal entities such as NCAI

#### **Vice-Chairman Report (Kevin Terry)**

Kevin described an idea he has for SWTFC member tribes to share information with each other on projects taken on  
Could be as simple as tribes writing and sharing brief narratives on various fisheries projects occurring on tribal land  
One possible approach is to post project information on SWTFC’s website  
Butch suggests that Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission may be in a position to help with this  
Another possible approach is for SWTFC to develop a newsletter or other type of regular reporting  
There was discussion about how easy and how well “fishing reports” work. Kevin creates these on a regular basis.  
Kevin is able to help facilitate a project to help improve intertribal information sharing (i.e., among SWTFC tribes)  
Such a project would be important for documenting accomplishments of SWTFC and its members  
Information sharing (and cooperation on projects) could also improve professional capabilities of fisheries staff  
Butch suggests that Kevin assemble a small work group to work on this and present topic at next SWTFC meeting

#### **U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service Update (Chris)**

Chris says that Western Native Trout Initiative is calling for proposals and tribes are invited to participate  
WNTI represents a strong potential funding source for native trout restoration projects/activities  
Chris needs proposals immediately (by next Friday 11/6). Deadline typically early in October every year  
WNTI prefers supporting comprehensive native restoration projects (e.g., removal + barrier + re-stock natives, etc.)  
More partners involved in project also improves chances of funding support  
Proposal should be ONE page and include: project description, title, contact person(s)  
If funding is awarded, project must be ready to move forward in a timely manner (e.g., no major NEPA issues, etc.)  
Kevin asked about possibility of funding MTFH native fish work; Chris thinks this is possible – will ask Jim B.

Mike says that WNTI support could probably work well for an intertribal orgs, in addition to individual tribes  
Butch points out that SWTFC needs such grant program info posted early on the website so tribes know

Chris points out that FWS should be able to provide better electro-fishing support to tribes starting in 2010  
Electrofishing boat/equipment will be more readily available at the FWS ABQ office

Chris indicated that no letters of support have been received from tribes for FWS fund requests at Alchesay NFH  
Alchesay NFH desperately needs federal funding to replace the decaying water supply line  
Unfortunately, SWTFC has not been able to gather tribal support yet for the FWS funding request  
There is no question, however, that SWTFC would like to see the pipeline repaired  
Norman Jojola indicated he would draft a template letter of support that tribes can consider  
Steve will send out the template letter when he receives it from Norman  
Chris provided the address/contact info for sending tribal support letters:

White Mountain Apache Tribe  
Planning/Community Development  
Byron McNeil – Director  
P.O. Box 1000  
Whiteriver, AZ 85941  
928-205-8665  
FAX 928-338-5195  
bmcneil@wmat.us

#### **Open Discussion**

Lawrence suggested it would be nice to see meeting locations rotated among different member tribes again  
Steve pointed out why meetings in ABQ have been much more common (convenience, central location, etc.)  
Butch suggests that having the annual (April) meeting in ABQ makes sense, but try to rotate the 3 quarterlies

**Meeting adjourned at 11:00 AM**

#### **Next Meeting:**

***SWTFC Quarterly BOD Meeting – January 2009  
To be held at Ohkay Owingeh.***

#### **Meeting Minutes taken by:**

Steve Whiteman, Secretary-Treasurer  
Southwest Tribal Fisheries Commission  
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