



# Southwest Tribal Fisheries Commission

Quarterly Meeting / BIA Southwest Regional Office – ABQ, NM / Feb. 5, 2010

**Meeting Convened at approximately 9:15 AM**

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

1. Mescalero Apache Tribe	Arthur "Butch" Blazer (Chairman)
2. Southern Ute Tribe	Ben Zimmerman (Fill-in Secretary-Treasurer)
3. Santa Clara Pueblo	Joseph Mark Chavarria
4. San Carlos Apache Tribe	Harold Nofchissey
5. Sandia Pueblo	Michael Bridges
6. Navajo Nation	Viola Willetto
7. Zuni Pueblo	Nelson Luna
8. Laguna Pueblo	Frank Cerno
9. Ohkay Owingeh	Not present
10. Isleta Pueblo	Not present
11. Nambe Pueblo	Not present
12. Cochiti Pueblo	Not present
13. Picuris Pueblo	Not present
14. Ute Tribe (U&O)	Not present
15. Pyramid Lake Paiute Tribe	Not present
16. Jicarilla Apache Nation	Not present

## **Other Attendees:**

Mike Montoya, SWTFC/Mescalero Apache Tribal Fish Hatchery (MTFH)  
Kenny Blazer, Mescalero Tribal Council  
Gilbert Gutierrez, Santa Clara Pueblo  
Joe Jojola, BIA Southwest Regional Office  
Norman Jojola, BIA Northern Pueblos Agency  
Jennifer Smith, BIA Mescalero Agency  
Ben Martinez, Sandia Lakes  
Chris Kitcheyan, USFWS  
James Sandoval, USFWS  
Angela James, USFWS  
Pete Stine, USFWS (retired)

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

### **Secretary / Treasurer Report (Ben Zimmerman)**

Past Minutes and Financial Status:

Ben presented the October 30<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: Viola Willetto, with 2<sup>nd</sup> from Joseph Chavarria; Approved by consensus

Last reported bank account balance \$33,877.27

Current balance from most recent statement (Jan 27 2010): \$32,177.27. Net change of \$1,700.00

Total Payments included: Sammy Johnson for 2008 SWTFC tax prep services \$1,700.00

Total Deposits included: [None] 0.00

Mike reported on \$1,700 expense paid to Sammy Johnson for 2008 tax prep services. Tax filing is required even though the Commission is tax exempt. A letter from the IRS was received last week explaining a \$1,750 penalty for late payment in 2008 and not filing for previous years. SWTFC is working with Mr. Johnson to appeal the penalty.

Mike reported that over the last six years there has been a savings in fuel and feed costs. This savings has been set aside in an endowment fund to operate the MAT Hatchery to serve member tribes.

Pete asked about state tax reporting. Mike stated that the commission will start reporting with 2009.

**Executive Director Report (Mike Montoya)**

Due to heavy snows, no deliveries from the Mescalero Tribal Fish Hatchery (MTFH) took place in the last quarter.

Fish health inspections took place on February 2, 2010. Sixty fish were taken from each of the five lots. Certification from the FWS will hopefully take place by March 1, 2010.

Target date for receiving fish from Inks Dam NFH is estimated at March 15, 2010. Could be sooner depending on Inks Dam water temperatures.

Butch asked about the status of native fish production at MTFH.

Mike stated flows are up 30% and two tanks are at full capacity. Water quality is a problem, mainly water hardness, and Mike will continue to work on the filtration system. The recirculation unit is currently covered in snow and Mike will start working on that system in March. Mark Jackson (Inks Dam Project Manager) will assist with setup of the recirculation system.

**Chairman Report (Butch Blazer)**

Butch stated that the Commission is working to stay on the right side of the IRS for tax reporting. Sammy Johnson is doing a good job, working under contract for the Commission, to resolve issues with IRS.

Butch has been working to resurrect the "Tribal National Natural Resource Strategy". A meeting was held in Denver on November 9-10, 2009 to coordinate efforts. Jane Hip (Tribal Liaison) assisted with the process of networking to bring together information and support to Tribal Leadership. The process, once established, will be a positive impact for the Commission and serve as a voice for tribes to address natural resource issues.

SWTFC Executive Committee meeting to be held soon in Mescalero, to plan next steps for the Commission.

Annual Meeting is scheduled for April, and will include election of two (2) officers: Chairman and Sec-Treasurer.

Kevin Terry's presentation on "Online Information Sharing on Tribal Fisheries Management" will be re-scheduled for the April meeting.

Mike discussed Commission funding. To this point the Commission has received no end of year funds. Bill Walker (Superintendent BIA Region 2) has inserted in the Green Book \$150K for operation of Commission activities which will provide a consistent funding source. Green Book status will be reported to the group.

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

An Electrofishing workshop is being developed to be held summer 2010, and will be limited to 20 students. The cost will be \$150 per person to pay for material costs, including the book, "Standardized Sampling Techniques". The course will be designed mainly for hands-on learning for stream and lake techniques/applications and will be taught by various instructors from New Mexico Game and Fish, Arizona Game and Fish, and USFWS-Pinetop. Potential project sites-Santa Clara Pueblo, Rio Grande Cutthroat.

30k-40k fish are being raised at Inks Dam. Fish are doing well and are approximately 7.5". They are watching water temps and will transport to Mescalero once temps get too high.

Mike discussed the timing for distributing to tribes the 10k fish raised at MTFH for the FWS.

Channel Catfish stocking for Navajo and Zuni is planned; it is hoped stocking can start earlier than usual.

Alchesay NFH is still in operation, with concerns that 6'-8' of snow at the hatchery may cause flooding when temps rise. Grant funding to repair the water supply line is currently under review.

**Designing a Naturalized Rearing System (Angela James, FWS)**

Angela offered a PowerPoint presentation and shared experience with building/operating a rearing facility modeled after a natural environment. Design included low stocking densities, variable diets, varied feeding schedules, light, and substrate.

**Update on Aquatic Nuisance Species in New Mexico (James Sandoval, FWS)**

James offered a PowerPoint presentation on aquatic nuisance species of concern in New Mexico: goldfish, New Zealand mudsnail, rock snout, zebra mussel, and quagga mussel. Species-specific characteristics, control methods and current distribution were presented to the group. An advisory group is being created to address issues related to these species. A notice of the meeting dates for the advisory group will be forwarded in the near future. The group needs tribal representative(s) understanding Navajo Dam incident, per James. James will forward NM draft protocols once available

**Open Discussion**

Harold informed the group of the passing of Chris Beazley (San Carlos Biologist) on January 4. He left behind his wife Krista and three children. Prayers are sought for his family and friends.

Harold informed the commission of a Biologist position available by the tragic loss of Chris Beazley. Job information will be forwarded.

Mike discussed the USFWS / Nat'l Cons. Training Center (NCTC) Leadership Training attended by Viola. Viola shared with the group her experiences and endorsement of the training. Mike nominated Nelson Luna for the training, although Nelson was unable to attend.

Norman gave an update on the Southwest Regional NAFWS conference. The Conference will be hosted by the Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community July 27-29, 2010. Session moderators and presentations are needed. In addition a conference theme is needed and a prize will be given by Norman for the selected theme. Please submit your ideas to Norman Jojola.

Norman announced the Southwest Youth Practicum scheduled for June 21-25, 2010.

**Meeting adjourned at 11:45 AM**

**Next Meeting:**

***SWTFC Annual Meeting – April 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2010  
BIA Southwest Regional Office – ABQ, NM***

**Meeting Minutes taken by:**

Ben Zimmerman, Fill-in Secretary-Treasurer  
Southwest Tribal Fisheries Commission  
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