



# Southwest Tribal Fisheries Commission

Annual Meeting / BIA Southwest Regional Office – ABQ, NM / April 23, 2010

**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. Zuni Pueblo                | Nelson Luna                          |
| 5. Santa Clara Pueblo         | Gilbert Gutierrez                    |
| 6. San Carlos Apache Tribe    | April Howard                         |
| 7. Ohkay Owingeh              | Not present                          |
| 8. Laguna Pueblo              | Not present                          |
| 9. Isleta Pueblo              | Not present                          |
| 10. Nambe Pueblo              | Not present                          |
| 11. Cochiti Pueblo            | Not present                          |
| 12. Sandia Pueblo             | Not present                          |
| 13. Picuris Pueblo            | Not present                          |
| 14. Navajo Nation             | Not present                          |
| 15. Ute Tribe (U&O)           | Not present                          |
| 16. Pyramid Lake Paiute Tribe | Not present                          |

## **Other Attendees:**

Mike Montoya, SWTFC / Mescalero Tribal Fish Hatchery (MTFH)  
Kenny Blazer, Mescalero Apache Tribal Council  
Aaron Koehlinger, San Carlos Apache Tribe  
Jennifer Smith, BIA Mescalero Agency  
Norman Jojola, BIA Northern Pueblos Agency  
Mike Oetker, FWS Southwest Regional Office  
Chris Kitcheyan, FWS ABQ Fish & Wildlife Conservation Office  
Ted Smith, Trinidad State Junior College  
Pete Stine, FWS (retired)

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

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

Past Minutes and Financial Status:

Steve presented the Feb 25<sup>th</sup> quarterly meeting minutes for approval, and pointed out several requested edits. One of the edits pertained to Aquatic Nuisance Species (ANS), and there was discussion about ANS monitoring. FWS has a new, improved sampling technique to confirm the presence/absence of ANS (esp. quagga mussel). New technique is genetics-based, much quicker than the "cinder block" approach, but is much more costly. Kevin T. plans to discuss ANS monitoring approaches with James S. at FWS; will share info with SWTFC members. Approval of past minutes: Motion to approve by Kevin T., 2<sup>nd</sup> from Nelson L.; Approved by consensus.

Steve gave the financial report for the SWTFC Discretionary Funds

The last reported bank account balance (from January 27<sup>th</sup> 2010 bank statement) was \$32,177.27

The current balance (from most recent statement, March 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2010) is \$32,177.27 for a net change of \$0.00

Total Payments included: \$4,623.66

Total Deposits included: \$4,623.66

Mike M. discussed the \$4,623.66 expenditure (approved by SWTFC officers) and reimbursement from MAT.

This was related to maintenance required on SWTFC heavy equipment following use at MAT.

Steve also discussed the MTFH Feed & Fuel Fund and provided a handout explaining the fund history and mgmt.

The fund is tied to fish production and purchasing at MTFH; we explored possibility of transfer directly to MAT.

However, CFO at MAT indicated the fund is better off under SWTFC control; therefore SWTFC will resume admin  
Feed & Fuel Fund is held in a SWTFC bank account and the balance as of April 5, 2010 is \$384,697.56

### **Mescalero Tribal Fish Hatchery Status (Butch Blazer, Mike Montoya)**

Butch explained the soft-funding history at MTFH and how we've reached an unsustainable condition  
Mike stated that the ability of tribes to purchase fish from MTFH is at risk; we can NOT continue on current track  
Butch plans to meet with FWS/BIA Regional Directors, and the MAT President, to discuss the dire funding need  
Mike indicated that support for a MTFH federal funding add-on request through Senator Udall's office is needed  
Mike Oetker (FWS) indicated his strong support of SWTFC and MTFH, and understands the funding need  
Unfortunately, FWS can't officially support the Udall request because it is not included in the president's budget  
Mike Oetker indicated his own Fisheries Program (FWS - SW Region) is already facing a FY11 budget cut  
Nelson asked about the intent of FWS to formally consult with tribes about problems with funding support  
Butch responded that natural resources have not been identified by the Administration as a priority at this time  
Butch says that tribal letters of support for MTFH could be helpful in securing federal funding  
In terms of strategy, it may be better to approach this as a "social/youth issue", instead of a natural resource issue  
Butch believes that developing a Mescalero youth conservation corp could be an avenue to support MTFH O&M  
Butch indicated that letters of support from member tribes will likely be requested following meeting with MAT  
Norman indicates that BIA can't support the add-on request, but can "support the issue"  
Norman believes NAFWS should be doing more to support SWTFC and MTFH  
There was also discussion about the Feed & Fuel Fund and growing it into an endowment for MTFH O&M  
Mike's estimated minimum cost for running MTFH (including salaries) is \$142K.  
Mike also estimates that the minimum reserve or buffer required to ensure hatchery operation is \$50K  
Finally, Mike estimates an endowment would have to be \$5.7 million to generate enough interest to cover O&M  
It may be easy to spend feed/fuel funds on more immediate needs now, but the fund would quickly disappear  
Mike and Butch believe that continuing to build an endowment by way of the feed/fuel fund should be a priority  
Butch pointed out the need for SWTFC to enter an agreement with MAT regarding funding/operation of MTFH

### **SWTFC Officer Elections (Mike Montoya)**

The current 2-year terms of Chairman (Butch) and Secretary-Treasurer (Steve) are expiring  
SWTFC bylaws require that a simple majority of member tribes (i.e., 9 of 16) must be present for the elections  
Mike acknowledged that we only have 6 members present, which is insufficient to hold the elections  
The consensus was that we should postpone the elections until a meeting where we have a majority in attendance  
Nelson suggested having a discussion about potential nominees, even though the elections are postponed  
Butch and Steve both indicated their willingness to continue on in their officer positions, if officially nominated  
Nelson recommends Butch and Steve to be nominated  
By consensus of the member tribes present, Butch and Steve are recognized as nominees  
Nominations WILL STILL BE TAKEN up until the elections are officially held  
The next quarterly meeting will be in conjunction with NAFWS conference in Aug, so attendance should be better

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

Kevin expressed desire to see improved attendance at meetings; Members need to get more active with support

### **SWTFC Newsletter**

There is a growing need to share information among members about tribal fisheries projects and activities  
Kevin shared a template for a SWTFC newsletter, proposed as "Currents", but other names will be considered  
Kevin is willing to support development/distribution/editing of the newsletter  
Members should consider submitting short, narrative articles for the newsletter; Kevin is willing to help with writing  
A newsletter could be a helpful tool in securing non-governmental funding (i.e., increased awareness, donations)  
Kevin requests that members contact him to discuss possible stories or other ideas about the newsletter  
Chris Kitcheyan offered his assistance to Kevin in developing stories about projects/activities on tribal lands  
Possible topics: SWTFC funding challenges, habitat restoration work, rec. fishing stories, aquaculture, etc.

### **Trout in Classroom (TIC)**

Kevin presented a plan to develop a TIC program with SWTFC; idea is to make TIC kits available to member tribes  
Kevin provided a handout with a description of how the program will work, application form, and listing of kit items

TIC has broad educational applications, and there has been great TIC success in schools at Jicarilla and So. Ute  
SWTFC Executive Committee decided to purchase 2 TIC kits to make available to members through application  
Kits would include most materials needed, e.g., cooling system, pump, aquarium supplies, etc. (\$1,000+ value)  
SWTFC will also provide trout eggs by way of MTFH  
Interested member tribes would only need to purchase the aquarium for approx. \$100  
Kevin has drafted an application that tribes can fill-out  
Norman offered that NAFWS-SW Region may be interested in obtaining a kit as well  
It was suggested that a good time to award the kits may be in the Fall, prior to the new school year  
For more information on applying to receive a kit, please contact Kevin Terry.

*FWS March Meeting on Alchesay NFH Status*

Kevin briefly summarized the serious waterline issue at Alchesay NFH, an important supplier of fish to SW tribes  
Alchesay NFH provides fish to many different tribal fisheries programs, but especially White Mtn. Apache  
FWS needs \$2.5M in FY11; Mike Oetker doesn't expect a federal budget decision until at least December 2010  
Funding looks favorable at this point because it is currently included in President's budget  
Kevin indicates SWTFC needs to support federal fund allocation to make repairs at Alchesay  
SWTFC plans to draft a letter to Senator Udall to support repairs; Kevin plans to draft the letter  
Chris K. inquired about possibility of MAT and WMAT joining in a unified request for federal support  
Chris indicates there are strong natural resource supporters in leadership at WMAT  
Group seemed supportive of the idea of SWTFC facilitating both leaderships working together on the issue

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

FWS 2010 trout production for tribes is proceeding as planned (production, scheduling); stocking already underway  
Stocking of catfish from Ink's Dam starts next week; catfish will be smaller than usual due to raceway rearing  
Federal fish passage funding is available; FWS wants to work with SW tribes on identifying project opportunities  
Meetings with tribes planned for August/September to discuss options, requirements related to fish passage funding  
Fish toxicant training (i.e., using rotenone/antimycin) is planned at Santa Clara Pueblo (August 16-20)  
Tribes are encouraged to attend; other gov't agencies may be participating in training too  
More information will be sent out through SWTFC email distribution  
Chris will be giving a presentation at NAFWS nat'l conference on Nat'l Fish Habitat Partnership program (NFHP)  
FWS would like to explore opportunities with southwest tribes for NFHP projects on tribal lands  
Santa Clara Pueblo's work on native cutthroat trout is an outstanding example of potential benefits of NFHP

*Aquaculture Education Opportunity (Ted Smith)*

Ted Smith, a professor at Trinidad State Jr. College (in Colorado), offered a PowerPoint presentation on an  
aquaculture-related educational program available at TSJC. The presentation focused on the 2-year Aquaculture  
Technician training program, the 50-credit curriculum followed, the program's successes, and the educational value  
of the hands-on approach.

**Meeting adjourned at 12:30PM**

**Next Meeting:**

***SWTFC Quarterly BOD Meeting – August 2010 (in conjunction with NAFWS SW Region Conference)  
Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community (Metro-Phoenix area, AZ)***

***Note: Possible election of officers at this meeting depending on attendance!!!***

**Meeting Minutes taken by:**

Steve Whiteman, Secretary-Treasurer  
Southwest Tribal Fisheries Commission  
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