



NTWC CONFERENCE CALL MINUTES – JANUARY 13, 2010

Present: René Rickard (*Tuscarora Nation/ Haudenosaunee Environmental Task Force*), Michael Bolt (*Eastern Band of Cherokee Nation*), Nancy John (*Cherokee Nation*), Denise Jensen (*Winnebago Tribe of Nebraska*), Carlyle Ducheneaux (*Cheyenne River Sioux*), Ken Norton (*Hoopa Valley Tribe*), Daniel Chythlook (*Aleknagik Traditional Council*), Alex Cabillo (*Hualapi Tribe*), Ann Marie Chischilly (*Gila River Indian Community*), David Fuller (*Port Gamble S’Klallam Tribe*), Phillip Cerner (*Coeur d’Alene Tribe*), Steve Crawford (*Passamaquoddy Tribe at Pleasant Point*), Satya “Deb” Misra (*Navajo Nation*), and Kathleen Hill (*NTWC Project Manager*) and Joseph Dupris (*NTWC Project Administrator*).

Excused: Daniel Kusnierz (*Penobscot Indian Nation*) and Nancy Schuldt (*Fond du Lac Band of Lake Superior Chippewa*).

1. Open Meeting

Chairman Ken Norton opened the meeting.

2. Roll Call

Vice-Chair Michael Bolt conducted roll call.

3. Review/Amend/Approve Minutes

The Council reviewed and approved the November 12, 2009 minutes without amendment.

4. Reports and Updates

Tribal Caucus - Ken Norton/Nancy John

Ken reviewed some of the events of the NTOC-AIEO meeting held in November. He said that Assistant Administrator DePass is getting very involved with Tribal issues. Nancy said there is a lot of information on the AIEO Tribal portal. Ken said that the date for the next NTOC meeting is still up in the air. Nancy said that it is still unclear whether the AIEO Director position will be a career or political appointee position.

Nancy reported on the recent NTOC call. Some of the topics raised were (1) the omission of Tribes as entities eligible to compete for environmental education grants, (2) the 2010 NTOC and AIEO schedule, (3) the May 20, 2009 federal agency leadership letter to Representative Oberstar regarding the Clean Water Act, and (4) Jonathan Binder’s report with regard to Tribal Enforcement, during which he noted that he is working with the NTWC and Office of Water.

Science Council – Daniel Kusnierz/Denise Jensen

Denise briefly reported on the Tribal-EPA Science Council meeting that took place in Washington, D.C. in December. She reminded everyone that the 2010 National Tribal Science Forum is scheduled for June 6-10 in Traverse City, Michigan. Denise said one issue of concern raised during the December meeting was the use of GAP funds for Tribal participation. The EPA co-chair is going to look into the issue. Nancy John noted that it has been determined that the NTOC is “of benefit” to EPA, so participants engage in “invitational travel.” The GAP funding issue does not apply to RTOC participation.

National Water Quality Monitoring Council – Dave Fuller

Dave briefly reported on preparations taking place for the NTWQMC conference in Denver. He mentioned the on-line newsletter and said that he is assisting in the effort to build a list to get more information out to Tribes. At this time, Dave was the only NTWQMC contact for Tribes.

Hypoxia Task Force

Ken mentioned a call he had received with regard to the Hypoxia Task Force. He said that the group is increasing its outreach to Tribes. He said that the person who contacted him was interested in seeking a Tribal representative from the Mississippi/ Gulf of Mexico watershed area. Michael Bolt said that after the presentations he and Steve Crawford made to the Task Force during its September meeting in Des Moines, Iowa, Task Force leaders had committed to “go home and figure out a game plan” to engage Tribes. He said that he would be happy to respond to any correspondence from the Task Force.

5. Meeting Topics

Prior to making his reports, Deb reminded his fellow NTWC members that he retired from Navajo Nation employment on December 31, 2009. He said that he would welcome the opportunity to participate with the NTWC if needed. Joeneal has also expressed interest in returning to the NTWC if he finds suitable employment.

Tribal Water Infrastructure meeting – Deb Misra

Deb said that he prepared a statement for the November infrastructure meeting he attended in Las Vegas. He said that Tribal funding should be kept at the 2% ceiling or increased. He reported that 2011 funding might come down to 1.5%. He also said that the number of Tribal homes without access to clean and safe drinking water has gone up. IHS has added many homes in Oklahoma. The percentage has gone from 10.9% of Tribal homes to 15.6%, with a goal of reducing that number by half. It is said that the 50% goal has been achieved in the Navajo Nation, but Deb questions the quality of that data. He reported that IHS is very preoccupied with current projects. There is a concern that none of the ARRA money is being used where the need is most critical, and that reconciliation needs to take place between IHS, BIA and EPA.

White House Forum on Clean Energy and Public Health – Deb Misra

Deb said that the meeting focused on the health benefits of clean energy and the health threat posed by vehicle emissions. Approximately 400 people attended, including U.S. Health and Human Services Secretary Kathleen Sebelius, EPA Administrator Lisa Jackson, EPA Assistant Administrator for Water Pete Silva and Navajo Nation EPA Executive Director/NTOC member Steve Etsitty. Deb also noted that Pete Silva would visit the Navajo Nation in May 2010.

NTWC Member Replacement

A brief discussion took place regarding the positions left open by Deb's retirement and Joeneal Hicks' resignation from Tribal employment. Kathy and Joseph will provide recommendations.

6. Announcements

The next STC3 conference call will take place on January 20. Steve Crawford represents the NTWC on the STC3 Steering Committee

7. Setting of Next Conference Call Meeting Date and Time

The next conference call will take place on February 10, 2010 (NTWC-Only 1:00 Eastern; NTWC-EPA 2:00 Eastern).

8. Closing of the NTWC-Only Conference Call

The NTWC-only call ended at 11:05 a.m. Pacific time.