



NTWC CONFERENCE CALL MINUTES – NOVEMBER 12, 2009

Present: Daniel Kusnierz (*Penobscot Indian Nation*), René Rickard (*Tuscarora Nation/Haudenosaunee Environmental Task Force*), Nancy Schuldt (*Fond du Lac Band of Lake Superior Chippewa*), Nancy John (*Cherokee Nation*), David Fuller (*Port Gamble S’Klallam Tribe*), Ann Marie Chischilly (*Gila River Indian Community*), Steve Crawford (*Passamaquoddy Tribe at Pleasant Point*), Carlyle Ducheneaux (*Cheyenne River Sioux*), Satya “Deb” Misra (*Navajo Nation*), Phillip Cerna (*Coeur d’Alene Tribe*), Kathleen Hill (*NTWC Project Manager*) and Joseph Dupris (*NTWC Project Administrator*).

Excused: Michael Bolt (*Eastern Band of Cherokee Nation*), Ken Norton (*Hoopa Valley Tribe*), Daniel Chythlook (*Aleknagik Traditional Council*), Alex Cabillo (*Hualapi Tribe*), and Joeneal Hicks (*Cheesh-na Tribal Council*).

1. Open Meeting

With the consensus of the NTWC, Dave Fuller opened the meeting at approximately 9:05 since Chair Ken Norton and Vice Chair Michael Bolt were unable to participate.

2. Roll Call

Dave Fuller conducted roll call.

3. Review/Amend/Approve Minutes

There were no minutes to review this meeting

4. Reports and Updates

Tribal Caucus - Ken Norton/Nancy John

Nancy John reported that the Tribal Caucus is meeting next Tuesday – Thursday, The Caucus will discuss priorities for the upcoming year, set meeting dates, begin national budget review and coordinate with AIEO staff.

Science Council – Daniel Kusnierz/Denise Jensen

Daniel and Denise said the Tribal-EPA Science Council is currently focused on the next National Tribal Science Forum meeting which will take place in June 2010. The Tribal Science Council newsletter will be launched in January 2010.

Hypoxia Task Force –Steve Crawford

Steve said the Hypoxia Task Force is sending letters out to all the Tribes in the Mississippi Basin, seeking nominees for a Tribal representative or representatives to serve on the Task Force.

He also reported that Michael Bolt has updated the United South and Eastern Tribes (USET) Board of Directors about current Hypoxia Task Force activities. The Task Force will meet again in early March.

Climate Change Conference & National Water Quality Monitoring Council

Dave Fuller discussed the Climate Change conference he attended at the University of Oregon in Eugene, Oregon. He said the conference focused on climate change and public health, largely from a legal perspective. Another topic of interest was carbon sequestration and carbon credits, with an emphasis on choosing responsible approaches with an eye toward the future (specifically 2030 – 2050).

Dave also reported on a two-hour NWQMC conference call he participated in on Tuesday, and said that 575 abstracts and posters are under review in preparation for the upcoming conference. He will spend the first week of December in Denver, helping to review materials and plan.

5. Meeting Topics

Region 10 Tribal Consultation Process

Phillip Cerna and Dave Fuller shared this document, but neither has written formal comments yet. A preliminary review of the draft process seemed quite positive, but it was noted that words on paper are just the first step. What really counts is the good faith put into real life consultation. Phil expressed his concern that Alaska Native Tribes weigh in on the consultation process regarding consultation with Alaska Natives Tribes, Villages and Corporations.

- Deb Misra took a moment to ask Dave Fuller if current technology (such as growing algae in mines and using big “radiator-type” mechanisms to absorb carbon dioxide) was discussed during the Climate Change conference. Deb also suggested that the NTWC should consider writing an issue paper on climate change technology.

- Deb noted that the Navajo Nation has participated in an ice-breaking precedent with the USDA. He said that the USDA has a tremendous amount of funding for water and wastewater, but that it has been extremely difficult for Tribes to get access to those funds because of restrictions and relative inflexibility. The Navajo Nation, Indian Health Service and USDA have developed a Memorandum of Understanding that will help to deal with some barriers on a project-by-project basis. Deb expressed his hope that other Tribes can benefit from this precedent.

Matt Richardson Invitation/Tribal Water Infrastructure meeting, Nov. 18-20 (Las Vegas)

Matt Richardson, Office of Waste Management Alaska Native Villages Coordinator, has followed up the discussion that took place during the October meeting with headquarters by inviting NTWC members to participate in a Tribal Water Infrastructure meeting. Nancy John and/or Deb Misra may be able to attend part of the meeting. Kathy was to follow up with them.

EPA Exposure Factor Handbook Update 2009 - Dan Kusnierz

Daniel Kusnierz opened the discussion by noting that a lot of entities rely on this handbook for water decision-making. He and said that he wanted to raise awareness about the opportunity to provide comments on this latest draft. The Penobscot Indian Nation is very concerned about the characterization of a survey which included some Native American sportfishers as a “Native American” study dealing with subsistence fishing. The manner in which the survey was conducted precludes it as a reliable measure of subsistence fishing. He suggested that other Tribal representatives might want to review the document to ensure that their Tribal data is being accurately reported.

White House Forum on Clean Energy and Public Health

Carlyle Ducheneaux was invited to this meeting, but is unable to attend and wanted to offer the opportunity to another NTWC member. The meeting will include a White House briefing on the public health benefits of a clean energy economy. Invitees include public health advocates and community leaders, experts from our agencies, and White House officials.

EPA and NTWC Action Items Update

Kathy asked for input on the draft action item list resulting from the NTWC-EPA meetings on October 7-8. Deb contributed two items and others will send input, if any, by e-mail. Once that information is received, Kathy will share the list with EPA for their review and input.

Kathy & Joseph Assistance to OWOW Wetlands program

This was an fyi to let Council members know that Joseph and Kathy are voluntarily providing travel organizing assistance to headquarters, Region 9 and Region 10 to support Tribal participation in two wetlands training activities.

6. Announcements

Karen Rudek

Karen Rudek joined the call at approximately 1:50 to inform NTWC members that she will be leaving federal service at the end of this month. She said that she considers her role in the establishment of the Council to be the most important thing she has accomplished during her years with EPA. She said that the NTWC is “beyond stellar” and that every single Council member has contributed to making a difference to the agency, and beyond, at both the national and Tribal levels. She said she has missed 14 weeks of work and appreciates the support she received at EPA. She will send her post-EPA contact information and extended sincere invitations to Council members to visit her at her new home in Missouri. She said the agency will not advertise her position until she leaves, but that there will be a definite emphasis on hiring someone who is dedicated to Tribal work. She is currently working on the competitive RFA which would support the NTWC for another 5 years.

Council members expressed their gratitude to Karen for her vision in creating the Council, her support and commitment to the Council, and the respectful manner in which she has worked with the Council members.

Karen’s goodwill and confidence in the NTWC will truly be missed.

7. Setting of Next Conference Call Meeting Date and Time

The next conference call is scheduled for December 9, 2009 (NTWC-Only 1:00 Eastern; NTWC-EPA 2:00 Eastern).

8. Closing of the NTWC-Only Conference Call

The conference call ended at approximately 11:07 Pacific time. There was no NTWC-EPA conference call.