

**Council for Native American Farming
and Ranching, Meeting: August 14-15, 2012
CD1 8-14 Track01 to Track09**

[Start of CD1 Track01]

Joanna Stancil: Good morning, everyone. I'm sorry to interrupt your conversations, but we're already a few minutes behind our schedule but we've got extra time built in to the day somewhere, we'll find it.

Again, my name is Joanna Mounce Stancil. I am the director of the Office of Tribal Relations for the U.S. Department of Agriculture, and this is the, I guess, we would call the first official day of the meeting for the Council for Native American Farming and Ranching. We're waiting for a couple more of our council members to show up, but they'll have to catch up when they go ahead and get here.

First thing I'm going to do before we have our blessing is to do the roll call. And let me explain why we do not have a chair opening up this meeting. We have elected to hold our elections for chair and vice chair to tomorrow giving the council members an opportunity to get to know each other, to learn more about each other, and then be more comfortable with making nominations for who they would like to lead the council. So, that will take place sometime tomorrow, either at the end of the public comment period in the 10-to-12 timeframe or before the end of the business day.

First, let me go ahead and get roll call. I'll just call down the list and you can let me know that you're here. I can see you, but this is for the public record. Minutes will be taken, and the meeting is being recorded. Hopefully, at the end of the two-day session, we will also look at having the recording of the meeting transcribed and that will also be posted to our website, the council website. Gilbert Harrison. Porter Holder.

Porter Holder: Here.

Joanna Stancil: Michael Jandreau. Chairman Jandreau. Gerald Lunak.

Gerald Lunak: Here.

Joanna Stancil: Good morning.

Gerald Lunak: Good morning.

Joanna Stancil: Jerry McPeak. Jerry is here. Mr. Morgan had to give a testimony so he will join us in future meetings. Angela. She is here. Edward Soza.

Edward Soza: Here.

Joanna Stancil: Good morning. Mary Thompson.

Mary Thompson: Here.

Joanna Stancil: Thank you. Sarah Vogel.

Sarah Vogel: Here.

Joanna Stancil: Good morning. Mark Wadsworth.

Mark Wadsworth: Here.

Joanna Stancil: All right. Janie Hipp.

Janie Hipp: Here.

Joanna Stancil: Chris Beyerhelm.

Chris Beyerhelm: Here.

Joanna Stancil: Dr. Joe Leonard. Will be --

Lisa Pino: Here.

Joanna Stancil: And substituting is?

Lisa Pino: Lisa Pino.

Joanna Stancil: Lisa Pino is delegate for Joe Leonard.

And Juan Garcia.

Juan Garcia: Here.

Joanna Stancil: There he is. Good morning, everyone. All right. To get back on the agenda, we are very fortunate that Gerald has offered to lead us in our opening blessing. If you're not familiar with working with Indian country, we begin and many times end our meetings and our gatherings with a blessing. Gerald, if you wish now.

Gerald Lunak: Good morning, everyone. I want to offer a prayer this morning. I want to thank the Creator for this glorious day, and I'd like to send out prayers to all the people that need prayers today, especially our elders, our spiritual leaders, and our young people. We ask the Creator to look over this meeting today and make it prosperous. We ask that all the people traveling in here travel in safe, travel home in a good

way, and our families are there safely when we get there. We just thank the Creator for bringing this group together. It's a long journey, as many people here know, and it's with His blessing that we've come here to make something good happen for the Indian country, so I just offer this prayer today. Thank you.

[Track 2]

Joanna Stancil: Yesterday we were honored to have Krysta Harden come in and meet with us to give regrets from Secretary Vilsack because he is traveling with President Obama. And at this part is the agenda we hope to share the opening, a video.

Female Voice: Suzanna is on her way up.

Joanna Stancil: She's on her way up. So, we'll hold on to that. Then I'm going to move down the agenda and give Suzanne Palmieri, the Chief of Staff to the Deputy Secretary, a chance to join us.

One of the things, as the designated federal official for the council that I have as part of my responsibility is before each of our major meetings is to check with each of the council members to make sure there are no conflicts of interest, and having done that, none were noted, and a couple of people did respond in writing that they did not have any conflicts of interest. So, at this point I am proud to announce that there are no conflicts of interest, and each of the council members is

free to continue their roles and responsibilities as members of this council.

Briefing on rules for conducting the meeting, they're fairly simple. The focus of the meeting is on the Council for Native American Farming and Ranching. Those council members that are seated in the center here, myself as the DFO and the staff of USDA. So, the function here is to bring the council members together for the first inaugural meeting and more of a tutorial or learning process to hear presenters, to gain information, and to become more comfortable with all the different programs that are offered by USDA.

During the meeting, the only speaking roles in the room are the council members, the DFO, or our presenters. We welcome the public to join us, to listen and learn. There -- please note in the minutes that Gilbert Harrison has joined us.

So, we ask that the public hold their comments until tomorrow, which is Wednesday, August 15th, that they hold them until the hour between 10 and 12, and we will be more than honored to accept their comments. So, the meeting is informal in the sense that council members feel free to talk amongst themselves, to dialogue as you need, to ask questions for clarification, and to do whatever you need to meet the needs of learning and your decision-making process.

Meeting materials and council records. There is a table in the front of the room as you come into the building here, into our room which does have some additional handouts. If you choose to add more paper to your binder, do so. But again, if at the end of tomorrow, you decide that you would not like the pleasure of carrying that on the plane, let us know and we will ship it back to the address. Okay. Just let us know, and we'll take care of that for you.

The most important thing is that the minutes of this meeting, that we do have note-takers, we have two volunteers in the room with us today taking minutes, so they'll take a -- not a verbatim. We have a recording for that, and hopefully that is set up. We have an audio-visual; John is helping us in the back of the room to keep that. But we are required by Federal Advisory Committee Act rules and guidelines to take minutes of everything that transpires in this room today amongst the council. And so, that will be part of a public record, and we have a website that it will be posted to as well.

So, we're moving right along. Let's see. We actually have caught up and we're ahead of schedule. So, do we have -- is Jodi here yet or she's coming over, she'll be here later?

Female Voice: Still [indiscernible].

Joanna Stancil: Still [indiscernible]. Okay. So, I'm going to slow down just a little bit. Also, when we are talking

for the -- and I should slow down even more. Because we do have volunteers taking notes, if we would pace our speech patterns and be clear with what we say, that will help them in taking clear notes, but it'll also help the recording and that poor transcriber that has to transcribe it when we finally get done with our two meetings.

So, let's look at the agenda, the review of the agenda for today.

Summary of written comments. Somewhere in my file, I have a stack of papers -- and I will get that to you in a couple of minutes -- we only had one comment received based off of the announcement in the Federal Register. So, I will hand that out to you in a little bit as soon as I find that. So, we have no other written comments submitted. And somewhere in my stack here is where those comments -- okay, I found it. Okay. And we'll go ahead and pass these around. We do not have any more information on the person that sent us the comment other than his name is Alvin R. James [phonetic]. His comment is, "A large part of longstanding FSA loans involves mostly interest. I think for those low-income American Indians, not Native Americans that is practically every U.S. citizen, that a threshold to forgive loan should be mandatory for those individuals over 70 years of age, those loans having been paid on for more than 10 years, those loans having a balance of less

than \$30,000. This would clear up administration of old loans and make more resources available for younger farmers who still are physically able to work their ranches. Respectfully, Alvin R. James." So, that will also go in the record, and that is, as I stated, the only written comment that we have received so far. And, of course, we will continue to receive written comments, there is media going along with this meeting, and I'm sure that's going to generate more interest.

All right. In review of the agenda, we've covered the summary from -- we're way ahead of the game as we wait for our two guests. We will have a much awaited break at 9:30 to 9:45. To do a little housekeeping, the bathrooms, as you go out of the meeting room, there is a glass display in the center along the wall. The men's restroom is closest to this room; on the further side of that glass partition is the ladies' restroom. At the break, we will have liquid refreshments, of coffee and water and such, but I'm also working with catering to see if we can get something a little sturdier to help you last until lunchtime.

We will have presentations from 9:45 to 4:10 p.m. That is the thrust of this day, is to hear from USDA representatives on various topics. And so, we have all of USDA's seven mission areas represented throughout the day today. We will have another break at 2:55 to 3:10. Whoops, forgot lunch altogether.

We are having -- we'll break at 12:10 to 1:25 for lunch here in the museum. That is on the first level. And if you haven't had a chance to visit the museum, the café is a wonderful experience. It offers you cuisine from all of the Americas. So, it's pretty good stuff. And we will have an area sectioned off for the council so that we can meet and stay together as a group.

Then we will come back and we will continue to -- we will finish our presentations and then we should wrap up and adjourn by five o'clock. And at this point, I'd like to - Rob?

Male Voice: Yes, Ma'am.

Joanna Stancil: Would you like to talk about this evening?

Male Voice: Sure.

Joanna Stancil: Okay.

Female Voice: Suzanna's [indiscernible].

Male Voice: We're going to have a social at the Holiday Inn Capitol. It will be at 5:30 this evening. It will be in the bar area. There will be a special place sectioned off for us, so hope to see you there.

Joanna Stancil: We will provide the munchies and --

Male Voice: Munchies and soft drinks.

Joanna Stancil: Soft drinks. Any other libation is on you. And we want you to show up tomorrow, so. Okay. I'll take

this opportunity to introduce Suzanna Palmieri, Chief of Staff to the Deputy Secretary.

Suzanna Palmieri: Hi. Good morning, everybody. Sorry, I'm just a little bit behind schedule.

Joanna Stancil: We're way ahead of schedule.

Suzanna Palmieri: Oh, good. All right. Well, that's great. That's great. Great. The morning started that way. I just did want to welcome everybody on behalf of Deputy Secretary Merrigan. She has a video that she taped last week for you all when she heard that you were here, as she had a longstanding commitment to her family which I hope you understand, that she needs to take that every once in a while, so we can keep her moving forward which this year has been particularly busy, and so I'm hoping that she gets a little bit of a rest while she's away. She's going to talk a little bit about a very important program to us, and I hope to you all. Obviously, she wants the work here at the council to be productive, and she wishes you all well in your work, and thanks you for your dedication and support to this effort and USDA's work.

She'll talk to you a little bit about the Know Your Farmer, Know Your Food initiative that she and Secretary Vilsack started in 2009, and we have sort of culminated our efforts in, what we call the Compass which is supposed to help direct and inform folks that are working around local and regional food systems,

which I think are important to a lot of different communities. We're seeing a lot of interest across the country, and we hope it's useful to you all as well.

So, if we can just show her video, that would be wonderful.

[Track 3 - Video]

Kathleen Merrigan: And so, I don't want to abandon the kids, we're off traveling. But I will meet with you --

Male Voice: Sorry.

Female Voice: We know where she's at now.

Female Voice: There she is.

Kathleen Merrigan: Hi. I'm Deputy Secretary Kathleen Merrigan, and I wanted to welcome all of you to headquarters here in Washington, D.C. and to thank you for your commitment and your time and the work the council's going to do; we're really excited about it. I'm sorry I'm not there in person. I have two young children and this is our family's vacation week, and I don't do as much as I should in the home front, and so I don't want to abandon the kids, we're off traveling. But I will meet with you in the future, as well as the secretary who is also on the road, and we're glad that our chief of staff, Krysta Harden, is there with you.

What I encourage you and to help us in this administration to fulfill President Obama's desire that we do more with Indian country and help you in the ways that are most meaningful.

Speaking of meaningful, when I have visited with representatives from Indian country and traveled around the countryside myself, I hear a lot of interest in local and regional food systems, building up food systems in Indian country. And I hope all of you have heard about the Know Your Farmer, Know Your Food Compass, a marvelous tool. If not, give me a moment for a small advertisement.

This is a geospatial mapping tool that's on USDA's website that you go to and you can look all across the country, and it shows you the investments that USDA has made in the course of this administration to support local and regional agriculture. You can search it by an area code and say, I want to see everything in a radius of 400 miles or 50 miles. You can look at a state, you can look at a county, you can look at it by themes. It's very navigable. It's a wonderful tool. I hope you take advantage of it. It's the 2.0 version. We released it earlier in the year and then we just re-released it in July with a lot more data points, 15,000 data points on this map. It should give you all kinds of ideas about how USDA programs can be used to support local and regional food systems. So, go forth and navigate the Compass. It may help you with ideas for your communities and help us all figure out ways that we can do better across the country in supporting people on our working lands.

Have a great time and have a productive council meeting.

[End of video]

Suzanne Palmieri: Thank you. Thanks. I'll just reiterate, have a great and productive council meeting.

Female Voice: Suzanna, [indiscernible].

Suzanne Palmieri: The Compass website? It's on the front page of the USDA website. There will be a Know Your Farmer, Know Your Food icon. It's a very bright red tomato. If you get to that website, the Compass, it's a map, pretty much first thing you see.

Female Voice: [Indiscernible].

Suzanne Palmieri: Yes. There are also a lot of nice case studies that are on the narrative piece of the Compass. We love to have additions any time we can find them. So, if you're working with USDA partners across the country and you have a success story or best practice you'd like to share, let us know. There are ways to -- there's an e-mail that you can send us your case studies.

So, we are finding that people are listening and that it is something that once we can see what's going on in the next county or what's going on in a community down the road, you have an idea, you want to see if it works, you can usually find something on the map that is close to what you're trying to do and link right on to the people that have put it together and

talk right to them. So, I think we're seeing that this is very, very powerful and how it's letting people communicate in this area.

I don't know how to get it up on the website, but here it is. It's the Know Your Farmer --

Male Voice: The big red tomato.

Suzanne Palmieri: The big red tomato. We had to debate whether it was a tomato or a pepper.

Joanna Stancil: Are there -- this is Joanna. Are you aware if there are any native communities on there?

Suzanne Palmieri: There are. There are.

Female Voice: Well, in effect, [indiscernible] yesterday, and when we were up in the Office of Tribal Relations and they specifically work with the deputy secretary's office to populate that website. So, you can already put a face with a name as council members and know that if we could start this up with additional stories, then Eleanor [indiscernible].

Suzanne Palmieri: But a lot of this effort has -- we've been trying not to be pushing it out from headquarters but wanting it to be community grown. So, the more people know about it and understand what we're trying to do and they bring us their ideas, then we can help figure out which is the best place for them to work with in USDA, and that's kind of the

point of how this is working. But it is working, which is the good news.

Joanna Stancil: Any other questions?

Mary Thompson: Good morning. I'm Mary Thompson from Cherokee, North Carolina.

[Indiscernible] one thing, what other partners you've had within the programs to help you get that message out and to get that program out to the community, to the farmers?

Suzanne Palmieri: Likely not enough, but we are trying to use a network of folk. We did a -- and this is all new terminology, and it's called Hangout, through the White House, which is they've been really, really enthusiastic about our efforts here and they understand sort of the power of the community-building capacity that this program has. We had a Hangout with some White House officials about a month ago when we re-launched, 9000 people could view. We had, I think, eight different locations connected. And the Hangout is just sort of a video conference on the web, so you get a lot more participation. But we are trying, kind of, in every way possible through the task force that put together this program initially has a membership of about 60 USDA, dedicated USDA, there are more people that sort have come in and out when we did different kind of projects, but we've asked all of them to put together their distribution list, so at anytime anything comes

out, we have to send it out by e-mail. But if you have suggestions about how better we can do outreach on this, we are always looking for better ways to do it.

Mary Thompson: I guess the suggestion would be to find those organizations within the community that the people know of, the farmers, the ranchers, and all the communities. Because not all of them have access to a lot of the USDA programs. There may be in the county but they're way out, or they may be in the state but they're many counties away. So, to me, that's one of the more important components of your project being successful, is getting it back to those farmers and those community members in rural areas.

Suzanne Palmieri: Well, I know we have found as a challenge. Just making sure that our own employees understand what it is that we're trying to do. I mean, headquarters could have great ideas, but if the field team doesn't --

Mary Thompson: If they don't get out there.

Suzanne Palmieri: Get it. So, I look at Juan as well, the FSA folks, we spend a lot of time. We actually had some folks in FSA come up with some strategies to sort of train, trainers to go out and to FSA offices so that people -- we don't want folks to come in and say, "Oh, I want to deal with your Know Your Farmer, Know Your Food initiative," and maybe a sort of a blank face that they don't know what the folk's talking about.

So, it has been -- this Compass is supposed to be not only just for external stakeholders but also for our internal employees to get a better sense of what different programs are. Because we do find that FSA folks aren't always as sure of how a rural development program might help an FSA farmer. And so, we're trying to get a kind of cross-communication amongst ourselves as well. And that's a big challenge. We have 110,000 employees that do all different kinds of things. I mean, we have -- the Forest Service as well is really trying to get very active in this space, and this is not something they think about, local and regional food systems, but they're trying now.

Mary Thompson: And I'm glad you recognize that it is an issue to get it out like that, because it seems to be even more of an issue to get it out to the Indian communities in rural areas. Thank you.

Suzanne Palmieri: Okay. Let us know how we can help.

Joanna Stancil: Any other questions before she goes back to headquarters? Thank you so much.

Suzanne Palmieri: All right. Thank you. Thank you all.

Joanna Stancil: All right. We're going to go ahead as we wait for Jodi Gillette from the White House to join us this morning, we'll go ahead and start with our presentations. We were going to do that after the break, but we have an hour or more until the break. Do we have our -- Daniel Whitley?

Male Voice: He's not here yet.

Joanna Stancil: He's not here yet? Is anyone here from Farm and Foreign Agriculture Services?

James Radintz: Jim Radintz, I am. My cohort, Mr. [indiscernible] hasn't arrived yet.

Joanna Stancil: Okay. Did you want to wait until--

James Radintz: We have a joint presentation so it probably would be best if --

Joanna Stancil: We are flying through the agendas.

[Track 4]

Joanna Stancil: And we thought we weren't going to have enough time to get everything done. Well, we're just going to zoom through this. All right. I do want it noted for the record that we do have a change. We're moving up the Tribal Technical Assistance Network, and we have Zach Ducheneaux with us to present on --

Zach Ducheneaux: Yes, ma'am. Good morning, everybody, and thank you very much for having us. It's an honor to be here and to have our staff here to visit with you folks, and, in our mind, help pave the way for the next 30 or 40 years of Indian Act policy.

It's kind of loud, isn't it? Is it too loud for anybody? I can just stand in here --

My name is Zach Ducheneaux. I'm from the Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe in South Dakota. I am an ag producer and recent graduate from the Farm Loan Programs. How about that Chris? I've been involved with the Intertribal Agriculture Council since about 1994 when we started the farm advocate program funded by Northwest Area Foundation. And Sarah was even working with [inaudible].

Joanna Stancil: Zach, can you speak closer to the mic?

Zach Ducheneaux: I can. It's loud over here though, and I didn't want to be too loud for anybody else.

So, the IAC has been working since 1987 on Indian ag issues. We were formed after a disaster in the mid-1980s necessitated federal assistance on Indian reservations. The congressional oversight committee asked the tribal leaders at the hearing, "Why, with all of these resources at your disposal, do the Indian tribes need this extra help?" And they said, "We would like someone to put together a study so we can get to the root of the need for this extra assistance." So, the IAC was formed from the group that did that study. It's the Indian ag workgroup, and they put together a report that identified a lot of the same issues that you're going to hear about over the course of your tenure here on the council: lack of access to credit, lack of ownership of assets to improve the value of the resources, lack of recordkeeping, just a whole gamut of issues

were identified in that report. The workgroup brought it back to Congress, and they recommended the creation of an intertribal organization to advocate for Indian ag on a national scale, and that's when the IAC was formed, in 1987. We've been at this for just 25 years now.

It's always been a vision of the IAC to have a network of technical assistance specialists out there in the field to help coordinate the access to these programs. Indian producers, as you're all aware, are in a unique set of circumstances where they need to not only be able to speak their tribal language but the language of the BIA and the language of the USDA. So, we kind of see ourselves as three-way translators out there to help bring everybody to the same table.

The network was formed in 2010 through a five-year agreement with the Office of Tribal Relations. The IAC is to provide 10 to 15 technical assistant centers. We currently have one in Alaska, one in Washington State, Oregon State, we've got one and a half in Montana, we've got a full-time position in Montana; Kole Fitzpatrick is here from Montana, our part-time person isn't here. Barbara Blake is here from Alaska. We've got one in Oregon, one in the Phoenix area, one on Navajo, one in Albuquerque. We've got two in Oklahoma, we've got myself and an assistant in South Dakota to serve the Great Plains region, we've got Dan Cornelius here from the Wisconsin region. Steven

Bond [phonetic] is the Phoenix area representative incidentally and he's from Oklahoma. And we've partnered with the United South and Eastern Tribes to cover the eastern half of the nation. There's just too much to learn there for us to bring someone fresh on. USET has a pretty broad and deep knowledge of the ag issues and the USDA issues in that part of the country, so we partnered with them to provide that service over there.

Since we've started -- and I think you all got a copy of the report that we provided -- since we've started we have found that there are several different issues nationwide. In my part of the country, it's ag credit. Where Dan is working over there in Wisconsin, the emphasis is food cooperatives, food systems, local food systems. Where Kole is over in Montana, it's a lot of ag credit and a lot of conservation issues. Barbara deals with a lot of subsistence issues. Steven is dealing with local gardeners, and just actually introducing the USDA to some people that have never heard of the things that the USDA is doing over in Southwestern part of the country. So, it's been a challenge, and our people have done a great job of rising to that challenge.

When we interviewed for the positions, we asked the people if this was their passion. Because we felt that if they were passionate about this, like the folks in the IAC are, they would be able to educate themselves on whatever issue needed to be so

that they can have that informed discussion that the agency official or the BIA official, on behalf of the producer. We want our folks to know that program as well as the person sitting across the table so that they can be the best advocate for that producer and the best translator for that producer.

And I've had the opportunity to go around the country to a few places and talk about what the network is doing. And every time I look at that agenda, I think, good Lord, 45 minutes, I could say everything that I've got to say four times. And every time, I ran out of time because I'm so passionate about this and we're doing so much. Rather than use up all of the time, I would rather ask at this point in time if there is any questions that the council has of me, of the IAC, of the network, and field those questions at this time. Yes, ma'am?

Female Voice: Could you actually have the technical assistance professionals stand so that we could put a face with the name?

Zach Ducheneaux: Yes, I would. Would you guys all stand up? Dan Cornelius is on the left, Kole Fitzpatrick, Steven Bond, Barbara Blake from Alaska, and we've got a couple more that will be in here in a little bit. Thank you.

Male Voice: How is the IAC funded?

Zach Ducheneaux: The IAC, at its inception, was funded through an appropriation through the Department of Interior

through the BIA. It got to a point with the budget crunch of the '90s that the IAC decided it was counter-productive to our constituents to be competing with them for the diminishing BIA funds. So, the IAC decided they were, at that point in time, going to go and seek other government grants and agreements and contracts to provide services out there that would fulfill our purpose. So, since that time, the IAC has sought funding from a lot of USDA funding, a lot of state agreements through the state USDA offices. We've got a couple of different applications turned in to Kellogg and Northwest area that we never did get any traction on. Mostly through government contract work.

Yes, sir?

Gilbert Harrison: Good morning. My name is Gilbert Harrison. I'm from the Navajo Reservation.

Zach Ducheneaux: It's good to meet you, sir.

Gilbert Harrison: It says in your report you have a representative in Navajo?

Zach Ducheneaux: Yes, sir.

Gilbert Harrison: It seems to me like it's a secret from the reservation because I've been in twelve important tribal groups [indiscernible] level and we have not heard of this organization.

Zach Ducheneaux: Okay.

Gilbert Harrison: Maybe we need to get together and start working those more and [indiscernible] the word.

Zach Ducheneaux: Absolutely.

Female Voice: [Indiscernible].

Zach Ducheneaux: We've got Daniel Motow [phonetic] who works in Tachi.

Gilbert Harrison: As far as getting the word out there in the tribal level [inaudible].

Zach Ducheneaux: Yes. And it's a challenge on Navajo, we're finding specifically Navajo, because of the lack of communication infrastructure. About the only way to get the word out is in person, face to face. And there's just -- it's such a broad nation that it's really hard to have that one person get out there to everybody. So, we've got Desbah Padilla in Albuquerque who also gets up to the Southeastern portion of Navajo and we've got Steven Bond who has also been to nearly every chapter house on the western side. So, we're trying, Mr. Harrison, and we will get to you. It's just a matter of time and effort. But we appreciate the comment, and we'll make sure that we get in touch with you.

Gilbert Harrison: I think next week there's an agricultural conference in Window Rock [cross-talking].

Zach Ducheneaux: Yes, and they will be there. Thank you.

[Track 5]

Zach Ducheneaux: Yes, sir, Mr. Wadsworth.

Mark Wadsworth: Yes, Zach. I was wondering if you could--

Joanna Stancil: You've got to speak into the mic, Mark.

Thank you.

Mark Wadsworth: Zach, I'd like you to kind of address the 1993 Agricultural Indian Resource Management Act, kind of the intent and maybe for both us, as the council and also to the USDA representatives here, and possibly how they could assist us with that fulfilling of that act.

Zach Ducheneaux: One of the first and foremost things that the AIC worked on was to wrest the control of ag policy on a local level from the BIA and the Department of Interior and put it back into the tribal government's hands. Through the American Indian Ag Resource Management Act in 1993, they were able to do just that. It is incumbent now upon our reservations and our nations and our tribes to exercise the authority that has been given to them through that act. And local control is critical in having successful policy.

And I think what Mr. Wadsworth is alluding to is the fact that with the help of the folks in the USDA, we're able to put some of that local control back out there where the USDA comes in as through the education of our folks, what having that control can do for you, what setting better policies for your range management or your timber management can do, how that can

get you in the door to the USDA programs, the proper keeping of production records. Without that, a lot of doors aren't open to you. The production records are part and parcel of knowing what you've got out there, and the Ag Resource Management Act takes the step of getting that from the BIA's hands into the Tribal Nations' hands.

Yes, ma'am?

Female Voice: For folks who may not be as familiar with that act, how does -- does the tribal government trigger the use of that act by -- by what means?

Zach Ducheneaux: The tribal government would put together an ag resource management plan that would then be passed by that government and that would become the marching orders for the Bureau of Indian Affairs. Currently, if there is a lack of local reservation policy, the BIA falls back on BIA regulations, some of which were written in the 1940s. Mr. Harrison's chuckling because he's been a victim of that.

So, what this does is it lets the Tribal Nations basically re-write the CFR to suit their interest based on their knowledge of what's going on out there. And there're very few tribes that have exercised that authority.

Mark Wadsworth: I guess, you know, the reason why I brought that up is we're going through that process of the ten-year plan, and the Bureau of Indian Affairs receives funding to

help tribes to develop those plans, but I see the need as you expand upon that is that it's supposed to be agriculture, how it works with the other natural resource programs within the reservation and how BIA can assist with that, and under the CFR, it basically says that the bureau will follow any rules, ordinances, or resolutions that the tribe, as long as they're not in direct conflict with the CFR.

One of the situations that we're running into is that as we went into the Integrated Resource Management Plan which that has evolved into, and I think that a lot of Native Americans out there refer to as the IRMP now, instead of the Agriculture Resource Management plan, that what we're finding out is as we're addressing this issue, we're getting into the NEPA portion. And as those NEPA documents -- because if tribes truly wanted to take control of their reservation and their resources, we would like what we had called as a TEPA, Tribal Environmental Protection Act, in which we would like the federal government to recognize our 10 steps to having projects out there.

And we're running into that when I order our program as working with EQIP programs and conservation programs, and I think that if we as a council would kind of get the word out to the NRCS people and the other natural resource and maybe the farm service people, that, you know, maybe we need to go into some MOUs or MOAs that our TEPA process would supersede the NEPA

process, and that's just a comment I would like to bring out there, that we're working on currently.

Joanna Stancil: This is Joanna. In the future, if you're going to make a comment, please state your name. You don't have to do both names. But if you'd state your name, that'll make it easier for the transcribers to take the minutes of our meeting.

I'd like to welcome Chairman Jandreau. Thank you. So, note that the chairman has arrived.

Zach Ducheneaux: Mr. Beyerhelm.

Chris Beyerhelm: Zach, this is Chris Beyerhelm with the USDA. First of all, I just want to thank you and IAC for the work that you've done to help. And I liked what you said about translating USDA and particularly farm loan programs in Indian country. I think we've got some real good success stories, and I look forward to continue to work with IAC on that.

My question for you is, when you saw this council is being formed, what kinds of things do you hope that we will do that will help you in the work that you do?

Zach Ducheneaux: The biggest thing -- and Mr. Beyerhelm has been very helpful to the network through his progressive approach to what the FSA can do. And a lot of times, what you need to do is legal and allowable and can be done if the people at the local level will just say, "Huh, well, I've never thought of doing it that way, but let me check and see if I can,"

instead of saying, it's never been done that way, therefore, it can't. And sometimes that latitude to be progressive, to be open-minded to the circumstance is there; other times, it's not.

One thing I'd like to see come from this council and what I had hoped to seek on from this council was more awareness of the actual circumstance on these Indian reservations. The IAC has taken to using the phrase "a credit desert." In Indian country, interest rates are typically double, triple or quadruple what they are in non-Indian country just across that reservation boundary because of the misconceptions that we've allowed to be propagated by lenders. They're fearful of tribal court jurisdiction. They're under the impression that Indian's don't pay, and that's not true.

So, not only help us and by all means, use the folks in the network as your field staff. If you have a question that you need answered, get a hold of one of these folks. We'll make sure you all have their contact information, have them go out there and do that work, gather that information for you, identify those barriers, narrow it down to a regulation or statutory changes needed, or a change of mind, a change of heart even. Sometimes that's all that's needed to be able to be more effective. And FSA has been a great example with progressive leadership, what can be done at the local level. It just sometimes takes some effort to get that to percolate down

through the bureaucracy to that level. And I'm not using bureaucracy in a negative way. It just is a bureaucracy and it takes time.

Chris Beyerhelm: Is there a positive way to use bureaucracy?

Zach Ducheneaux: It just is.

[Track 6]

Joanna Stancil: Are there any other questions?

Zach Ducheneaux: Yes, sir, Mr. Lunak.

Gerald Lunak: I'm going to need to talk to that mic?

Joanna Stancil: Yes, please, if you would. We are recording the meeting as part of our taking minutes of this. Okay. Well, they were supposed to be wireless but they didn't work out that way. Sorry. And just restate your name. Thank you.

Gerald Lunak: Gerald Lunak. I guess, I have a question regarding FSA and the duplication of the tracks versus allotment, and beyond that, just the communications between the local USDA office and the local BIA leasing office. And I've actually talked to the FSA of our county, but we would like to have considered or pursued is if there's a way that we can somehow marry these two processes. Because basically what we're doing is we're issuing a lease through the BIA by an allotment, and then that producer has to walk that information to FSA, and

then get that tied into their system as a farm track. And we feel like the one thing, the chance of that communication proceeding, sometimes it doesn't happen, sometimes it's misconstrued.

But the other thing beyond that is for tribes who actually are on the ground developing farm plans through BIA bidding processes is we have that immediate, direct, current information, and that information should actually be transposed to FSA directly so that we don't have acreages that are either lost or misconstrued through that process, or just because the length of time it takes for FSA to receive and process is an issue. I think that's a detriment to producers, because they may not be able to get the acreages that they have in the system. And secondly, it's a good communication process. And I know there's probably legal processes but that's something that we'd sure like to have, IAC [indiscernible].

Juan Garcia: This is Juan Garcia. Gerald, you bring up a very good point. In fact here during the last couple of months, we are working with OTR and BIA, and we've already started a process. In fact, we're working with a pilot county right now to try to do exactly what you're saying so we can merge your acreage, your track data with our track data. So, it's work in progress right now.

Gerald Lunak: The same with regard to [indiscernible], we have updated databases on all our leases, we [indiscernible] through this process [indiscernible].

Juan Garcia: We're working on that right now.

Zach Ducheneaux: Thanks, [indiscernible]. And Mr. Lunak and Mr. Garcia, what we can do to help is, is out there in the country, there are little pockets of this stuff going on on a local office level. At home on Cheyenne River, the BIA works pretty closely with the FSA on these track numbers. We even got our farm loan officer to visit the tribal headquarters a couple of times this year. We're doing good. What we can do is as you identify these things that you feel need to be changed based on your expertise and your fields and your knowledge of your region, make us aware of what it is you're looking for, we might know where there's a pocket of it happening, and we can bring those folks to you and say, this is how we do it, this is why we do it, and help share that information of those good practices.

Ms. Stancil, if you would like me to sit back down so the folks that are scheduled to be here at this time could go, I'll be here all day.

Joanna Stancil: Thank you, Zach, for volunteering to do that because we do have Jodi Gillette just joined us, the senior adviser to the president.

Zach Ducheneaux: My boss is very important to me, but her's is more important.

Joanna Stancil: Thank you.

Zach Ducheneaux: Thank you. And I'll be around all day. Catch me at lunch, catch me at supper, and I'll be back up during my scheduled time if you have more questions. Thank you, folks.

Joanna Stancil: All right.

[Track 7]

Joanna Stancil: All right. Welcome, Jodi.

Jodi Gillette: Thank you.

Female Voice: Yey, Jodi.

Jodi Gillette: So, I just want to thank everybody for traveling all the way to D.C. for those of you that are coming from out of town. Thank you, Janie, and folks for hosting this wonderful, wonderful first council meeting. I know that many of you have been working on these issues for quite a number of decades, years, some of your families, centuries. And so, I think that it's very important that we spend a little time to acknowledge all of the people that have come before us and the people that are going to come after us, because we know that they're also a wonderful, wonderful resource that we need to pay attention to. And I always thank Janie for reminding us about the youth and their role in our work today.

I do want to say that this administration -- start out by saying that this administration has always paid a close attention to the past. And so, part of what the president and his cabinet members have always focused on is trying to get out of the shadow of the longstanding disputes, the legal disputes that occur between Indian country and the United States government. And we know it's a very long past that has a lot of history, a lot of pain, it does cast a shadow, and there are some dark chapters that we're trying to move past. And from the very top, people have always talked about being able to work with people in a good way, and part of doing that is healing, and the Keepseagle settlement was a big chapter and part of that narrative. And so, I want to thank USDA, the secretary, the staff that he brought on board, the people that were in the civil division and all the folks that were involved with that, and then especially also the folks that worked on the case as well. So, I know Sarah was intimately involved, as you all know, and those of you that were part of the class.

You know, coming together does take two sides. It doesn't just take the government and deciding that we're going to move on and resolve some of these things, it takes two. And I always thought of this case as something that was very close to me, obviously, because I'm from North Dakota, I'm from Standing Rock, so the name of the plaintiff is Keepseagle, know the

family, have been just always aware of them. And I also understand the terrain that many of you had dealt with from an individual perspective.

As a tribal member on the reservation, I grew up in Pine Ridge but I have relatives and folks in my community that have had a long history with accessing credit and having challenges and barriers in their way to make sure that those things were addressed in a real way, and this administration is something that I feel very strongly and personally about. And I would say that Keepseagle for me is probably the thing that exemplifies why I came to D.C.

I think that for too long people have -- and this is a typical thing to say, but people have talked about things, but actually doing things is another level of commitment, and I think that all of you coming here today have taken that step forward to make sure that we're all walking together towards a brighter future. And that brighter future absolutely has to be tied to the land, absolutely has to be tied to the individual people that have the expertise and the knowledge to make not only the programs work but make sure that the people that are using, the end-user of the programs are getting the best deal.

So, we just heard a couple of examples where systems don't work together. The Department of Interior, USDA, they're two different agencies, and so there's sort of a siloing or a non-

communication or a sporadic communication, inconsistent communication. It might be really good in one area, it might not be very good in the other area. And I think that my time, both at the White House and at the Department of Interior -- because as you might know, I went to the Department of Interior for about 16 months and spent time as a deputy assistant secretary for Larry Echohawk, and at that time, I worked with USDA and the programs on ways that we can, I guess, communicate is the number one thing.

You see time and time again where USDA has the programs, they have the wherewithal, the knowledge, the data on farm and ranching, but you have BIA who has the legal authority over decision-making on lands. And so, having the best interaction and interface between those two agencies is critical. And I'm glad that it was one of the things that is brought up in the first hour of this discussion, because I do think that that's a charge that this council can provide and advise that we make some real progress on the things that are happening. And I don't want to say that nothing is happening, because for a long time, there have been MOUs in place and we have tried to drill down and find some of those specific things that folks have brought to our attention. The field is really where it's at, and we can -- as politicals, we're here for a short time, we're not here permanently, but really making sure that those best

practices are institutionalized and made consistent across is really important.

The seating of this council is also something that's part of what the president is committed to in terms of consultation. So, even though this isn't a consultation group per se, it is part of the way that we're trying to improve what kind of information we're getting from the outside. And this is -- you're seated with Department of Agriculture people and you are working together on these types of things, but the communication is key and having that openness and that sort of responsibility to -- I know that the people that work on the government side really are here and committed in a way that everybody from the top, from the president, Secretary Vilsack, Secretary Salazar, everybody takes consultation very seriously, and it's good to see this group of people coming together to do that. But also, the work that you're doing at the roundtables that you've already had in the field and that you continue to do is also something very key. Because as you know, part of consultation is not just going out and listening, but also making sure that those ideas are translated in a meaningful fashion into policy, into changes that happen to make everything work in a more efficient and streamlined fashion.

The Rural Development, FSA, there're all these different agencies, and you're going to -- I think you already -- today is

when you're going through a lot of them. And I just always think of USDA as sort of the place that I know there's a lot there, but I'm not exactly clear on all of it. And this is probably the area where a lot of natives are unfamiliar with the ground, and I'm glad to see that there's going to be special attention paid to what is available at USDA. It's one of our largest agencies, and it does a lot across the country. Last year, the -- or, I guess from 2009 to 2011, Rural Development alone has placed \$1.3 billion in rural native communities. And that's a big chunk, that's a great number.

[Track 8]

Jodi Gillette: But we also know that the need is very great. And when you talk about infrastructure projects, when you talk about the cost of some of the broadband, the needs that are out there -- broadband, water, the electrification needs -- there's a lot that Rural Development can do and they've gone a long way but we know that there's more work to be done. And part of that is trying to find smarter ways to work together locally. The budget realities are telling us that it's not feasible to have -- to think that it's going to get better. The budgets are probably going to decrease, and I think that we are going to have to find new and creative ways to come up with solutions locally, especially for the infrastructure projects. And that's something that I'm really interested in hearing

about, if the council has any thoughts or has any discussion on it, and I'm sure that I'll be keeping close contact with USDA about the progress.

I also think that all of you are very heroic, I guess in my mind, because of the commitment that you put forward to address not just what happened in the past but try to make it better, in that we have a special kind of commitment, I think in Indian country. And I can only speak for my own community in terms of how we think about food and how we think about how we take care of ourselves. And in this realm, the food and agriculture, those have always been a part of our people and the way that we live, the way that we take care of ourselves as we have to eat. And so, you have a varying degree -- or, you have diversity, I should say -- you have diversity in Indian country about how different native communities think about food and agriculture.

And at this point, there are some people that have been thinking about industrialized food development for a long time, and it's been hard to get into that realm. But it's not a stretch from our values. I mean, this isn't something that we're just coming up with. There's a long history that pre-dates the beginnings of this country, and some of the most interesting things that I've heard -- and this is why I think your convening here is so important -- some of the most interesting things that I've heard is at our first annual Let's

Move! anniversary, there was a woman, and I think Dustin [phonetic] brought her from the Muckleshoot Tribe, and she was incredibly -- I can't remember her name, but she was -- Valerie, yes, Valerie, and what she talked about was Let's Move! in Indian country, how we're having to look back at our food sovereignty and really look at the ways that we think about food as Indian nations. And some of the things that she's doing or trying to start going back -- and I always say, I don't know if this appropriate or not -- I always think, back to the future.

So, they're starting to look at the traditional ways that they used to eat, and they're using that as a solution to some of the modern-day problems that some of our current eating and diet, that it's not the healthiest. And so, we know that's a big initiative for the First Lady. She wants to combat childhood obesity in Indian country. But, where the keys are -- and this is where the council's work is so important -- is the keys are really in how -- the understanding of the land, the understanding of food, the understanding of what we know as Indian people are important to us and how that can play a part in the solution. And those are the things that are really interesting to me to try to figure out and couple what's important to Indian people to creating and helping to boost or accelerate the economy, and then also making that into jobs and a healthier way to eating.

And I just have to say that the items that I'm aware of are -- I don't know of everything that's going on out there, but certainly the popcorn that's being grown in South Dakota and I think some of the wild rice, the harvesting, but it doesn't just have to be the traditional food sources. It could be a lot of things, whatever you think that makes the most sense for your community. And I guess that's what I'm trying to say, is that the decision and the authority and power really lies with the Tribal Nations and built upon the growing knowledge and expertise of the farmers and ranchers.

And just not -- I am certainly not a -- I don't come from a family of ranchers and farmers, I come from a family of teachers, so both my parents are teachers, but I think that growing up in the plains and having to ride horse -- I mean, everybody has to ride horse, and having close relatives that do engage in farming and ranching gives me a special appreciation for the hard, hard work that people do every single day to make their ranches and farms successful. And it is every single day. And I just have a lot of admiration and respect, and I'm so glad that some of the folks that are on this council have been a part of that culture and will not be afraid to roll up their sleeves and get things done for all of Indian country, through the council and USDA.

So, with that, I just want to thank everyone and appreciate the time that you've afforded me, Janie, and the council and Joanna, you guys have always been wonderful in including the White House in keeping us abreast of the items that are confronting you. So, thank you for that. And I'm happy to take a few questions if you'd like.

Joanna Stancil: Are there any questions? Please state your name if you have a question for Jodi.

Mark Wadsworth: I do. I was wondering, Jodi, as I remember back into the Clinton administration with Al Gore, when they used to have the enterprise zones and enterprise communities, and I think it was through Rural Development maybe that came through. And I remember that Pine Ridge Reservation was an enterprise zone at that time, if there is -- and I hope, you know, re-election, is there any effort looking in that direction again?

Jodi Gillette: Well, I mean, this is -- if you're recommending it, I think that would be a good recommendation to look at ways to target resources and I think there's a lot of lessons to be learned over time and how we could improve the effectiveness of something like that. But if that's something that this council is interested in, we're certainly open to it.

Joanna Stancil: For the record, let's just state that the last comment, the male voice, was Mark Wadsworth.

Mark Wadsworth: Sorry about that.

Joanna Stancil: That's okay. It's kind of hard to get used to that.

Mark Wadsworth: I'm not used to this, [indiscernible].

Joanna Stancil: I know, I know.

Mary Thompson: Hi, I'm Mary Thompson from North Carolina. And I was just previously listening to Zach with IAC, and I was so glad to note in there that as one of the issues they had noted youth in agriculture. And we've always -- I've always considered youth in agriculture and women in agriculture and being an Indian a triple minority. And then I'm a veteran, so I'm four times minority, right? But what I was wondering about -- and you mentioned in the RD program, \$1.3 billion in rural, tribal areas, and you would like to know about the infrastructure needs out there. Do I understand that correctly?

Jodi Gillette: Uh-huh.

Mary Thompson: And for these youth and these women in agriculture, sometimes -- you mentioned some of the -- going back to the traditional crops, back to the future, and I kind of do that with our Cherokee wild edible crops. But with that though, with that component, there's this other -- and the terminology, I think, is value-added product. And because a lot of times, some of the traditional crops and soy, the crops that are not making it in these drought situations, that maybe as

they look at other value-added crops -- and they are, whether they're wineries or whatever grows in that particular area, that there could be additional funding designated for youth and women in agriculture, and maybe they need that value-added component in order to keep them there. Just a thought. Thank you.

Jodi Gillette: That's a good idea. That's great. Thank you.

[Track 9]

Joanna Stancil: Please speak into the mic. Thank you.

Gilbert Harrison: Good morning.

Joanna Stancil: Are you on? Just state your name.

Gilbert Harrison: My name again is Gilbert Harrison. I'm from the Navajo. One of the biggest impediments for economic development and even farming and ranching is the lack of investment because of the trust status of the reservation. You can't invest in the land and expect to get that investment back at the end of whatever period because according to the BIA, it's all trust property and the owner goes back to the nation. So, if I put a lot of money into farming or even at just developing a market of some type, infrastructure, I get no chance of getting that investment back because of the trust status.

I would like to see some effort so that the individuals that invest in land or in businesses have an opportunity to get their investment back at the end of the term. And that really

is a big impediment to anything we do. Because right now we put up -- my family and I, we put a lot of effort into getting our farm up. But at the end of that term, the land goes back to the BIA, as you say, and I get no investment back, I can't expect any kind of -- anyway, I think that's something that needs to really be discussed, because not only does it apply to Native Americans, but we try to invite outside people to invest. There's no way that we can do that. And I think that's something that really needs to be addressed is how can we get some sort of investment, incentive-type of ideas into the BIA. I know there's a lot more to be said about BIA but I'll leave it at that. Thank you very much.

Jodi Gillette: Thank you. I think it's going to be really a good time for us to have these kinds of discussions especially in light of the reg reform that's occurring over there. They just recently went through the process of reforming the business, home site, and wind and solar leasing regulations, and they split off the ag regs, and so the ag regs are not in the final rule state, they're in the beginning. So, I think those discussions are happening with diff workgroups, and I'm happy to give the name to the folks, Joanna, so that they have -- you guys are fully aware of when those agriculture leasing regs are going to be up for proposed comment. They haven't even been

published yet, so there's no proposed rule out yet. That's a really good place to address it.

The other place that I would definitely look at is going to the Indian Trust Administration and Reform Commission. There's also a similar -- it's not similar to this. The only reason that it's similar is that it is also a way that they're trying to improve the trust administration in light of the Cobell Settlement. So, they had started up a commission, it's a FACA committee over at the Department of Interior, and I think they're having quarterly meetings, so that might be some good information to share with the council. They're really looking at reforming how they look at trust property, and how their relationship with the individual land owners as well as the tribes when it comes to trust administration. Thanks.

Female Voice: This isn't really a question, but I wanted to thank, on behalf of the Keepseagle team, the support and the settlement of the Keepseagle case, having endured eight years of the Bush administration, having the Obama administration, Secretary Vilsack come in was, like, pretty much night and day. So, I think -- you know, this is one of outcomes of it, and this council is going to go on for five years, and hopefully we can accomplish a lot of the objectives that the White House shares.

Jodi Gillette: Thank you. Thank you for your work. And I want to also thank the folks in USDA for expediting the Track A claimants. That's really great.

Joanna Stancil: Any other questions of Jodi? All right. Thank you so much for being with us today. I think we'll take this opportunity to go ahead and take our morning break. If you will please be back in your seats at 9:45, we'll be back with our agenda, and with farm and foreign agriculture service. There are refreshments on the right side of the room including the terrible cookies.

[End 8-14 CD1 Track 9]

[End of transcript]