

**Council for Native American
Farming and Ranching, Meeting: August 14-15, 2012
CD4 8-15-12 Track01 to Track06
Contains Election of Chairperson**

[Start of CD4 8-15 Track 1]

Joanna Stancil: Welcome back, everyone. If you'll take your seats, we'll get started with the rest of our agenda. All right. We have -- if I could have everyone's attention, please. We have two representatives that are ready to talk to us. From Farm and Foreign Agricultural Service, we have Karis Gutter, deputy undersecretary for Farm and Foreign Agricultural Service, and with him is Brandon Willis, senior advisor to the secretary. Yes, please, at the podium.

Karis Gutter: Good afternoon. Again, my name is Karis Gutter. I'm originally from Terry, Mississippi, population 500, one traffic light, it's a blinker now, and we've got a main street; once you leave Main Street, you're out of town. For the most part, I've been at USDA for the past three years. I started my very brief career at USDA as the deputy administrator for field operations at FSA, overseeing the some 2200-plus offices and nearly 13,000 employees at FSA. It was a wonderful opportunity for me to get an opportunity to meet a number of communities, big and small, of all different genres. And I'm pleased to have an opportunity to say hello to you all quickly.

I don't have any prepared remarks, but I will pinch it with Brandon Willis who's going to talk a bit about the Farm Bill.

But for the last two and a half, three months, this administration has been focused, like a laser, dealing with a number of issues impacting farm communities. And in our mission are, the Farm and Foreign Ag Services, I oversee both crop insurance, RMA, and the disaster assistance programs of FSA. And so, as we've been dealing with drought, we've recently made a number of announcements that really begin to address the unique needs of farmers and ranchers and cattlemen of farm country out there, ranging from our farm loan interest rates on emergency loans being reduced to opening up conservation lands to emergency haying and grazing needs for livestock producers.

The secretary has been pushing very hard with this administration on Congress and the need to pass a Farm Bill sooner rather than later, and Brandon's going to give you a bit more detail and context about the Farm Bill in just a second.

But the president has really been focused on what is it that can be done by this administration, not only within USDA but across the executive branch. And so, he called a series of meetings, an all-hands-on-deck set of meetings with the White House Rural Council which consists of a number of federal agencies ranging from the Small Business Administration, the transportation department, and others, and what we've been

trying to do is figure out how we make resources more readily available to address some of the more contemporary needs out there throughout the country. So, that's a snapshot of what I've been currently working on.

But this administration, since we came in some three and a half, almost four years ago now, we've been focused on trying to fix some systemic problems and issues that have plagued the department for quite some time. The secretary's first action, one of the first actions, was the issue of cultural transformation. He's called on all top executives within the department to really be focused on culture transformation and how do we create a department that better represents the farm communities that make up the U.S. economy. And so, we're working hard on those issues, both within FSA and RMA, those two agencies under my mission area that I oversee. We've also got the Foreign Ag Service as well.

But for the most part, we've embarked upon our diversity roadmap focusing much, much more on how we bring in some of the best and brightest talent to help deliver our programs going forward. But we've also looked at our policies and regulations ranging from how do we administer crop insurance programs and what crop insurance -- what types of crops that we do insure, and how we better cover or better provide access to coverage for communities small, large, midsize, you name it.

At FSA, we're absolutely looking at how do we make our farm loan program more readily available. You've probably heard from a group of folks already that talked about some of our newer initiatives ranging from the MicroLoan Program to the operating loan set-asides where a number of our funds are specifically set aside for socially disadvantaged producers, farmers, and ranchers.

But again, I wanted to say hello, let you know that I'm accessible to you. I am your deputy undersecretary if there are issues that need to be brought to my attention. If you've got a pen and pad, I can give you my e-mail address so that if you've got an issue, I may not have the answer but we've got plenty of capable, qualified staff who can help. My e-mail address is karis -- K-A-R-I-S -- .gutter -- G-U-T-T-E-R -- @osec -- O-S-E-C -- .usda.gov. And I welcome you to reach out to me at any given point in time and let me know what's going on.

But in addition to that e-mail address, I know we're still dealing with a number of rural communities where access to technology is somewhat on the rise but may not be where it needs to be -- my telephone number, 202-720-7107. But I really appreciate the brief four to five minutes you've made for me to say hello. We're glad to stick around for quite some time. We've got folks on the council representing the agencies as

well, and so we really appreciate this relationship, and hope to do great things going forward. Thank you so much.

[End of CD4 Track01]

[CD4 Track 2]

Joanna Stancil: Does anyone have any questions? All right.

Karis Gutter: [Indiscernible] say the number again, 202-720-7107.

Brandon Willis: I'm just going to provide a brief update, kind of a high level of the Farm Bill. Before I do though, I just wanted to thank everybody for taking time out of all your schedules to come back here and do this. I sure appreciate it. I just want everybody to know, I know you've taken a lot of time out in sacrificing to be here.

Farm Bill. Every five years, Congress goes about to reauthorizing the Farm Bill. Oftentimes, it's written at the very last moment, oftentimes it's extended. This Farm Bill might be no different than what has historically happened.

The role the administration has played is a little different this Farm Bill than some others. Oftentimes administration will come out with a booklet that has some ideas of direction they would like to go. These are sent to the Hill. The immediate reaction usually from the Hill is, "It's not good enough. We need to do something different."

The secretary decided to go a little different route this time, and he decided instead of sending his own proposals was to work with Congress on -- to help them achieve what they want but to do it in a way that makes sense for farmers and ranchers, something we can implement, help us get programs out quicker and easier on the producer. And it's actually worked quite well. Where we stand today is the Senate has passed the Farm Bill. They've done it in the committee, they've done it across the floor, and the numbers are going to startle you. Just to give you a little perspective of how this Farm Bill is different than the last two.

The last Farm Bill -- well, two Farm Bills ago in 2002, they had a pretty good budget situation at that time. They added about \$80 billion. When you write a Farm Bill, you can basically spend what the current program would cost if you just moved them forward for the next five and 10 years. And what they did then is they had that money, plus they added on about, I think, it's \$72 billion. That's 2002, they added \$72 billion. You fast forward in 2008. We thought it was a pretty tough budget at that time. At the end of the day, they added about \$10 billion or \$11 billion. So, you go from adding \$72 billion to the current programs, you go to adding \$11 billion to current programs. To give you perspective, the Senate cut, \$23 billion.

So, instead of adding, they cut. And \$23 billion is obviously real money in the Farm Bill.

The House has not passed the Farm Bill yet. What the House has done is they have passed a Farm Bill out of the House Ag Committee. But for those who are following the news the last month, one of the struggles they have, just because of the political dynamics in the House, is trying to balance those who would like to cut funding from nutrition programs with those who would like to keep funding their nutrition programs and those who would like to see additional cuts in the commodity program. You have very different feelings amongst different members in the House. And because they didn't feel like they had enough votes, the full Farm Bill never has gone across the House floor and it remains to be seen what they'll do.

What they ended up doing right before August recess, about two weeks ago, was instead of sending the Farm Bill across the floor, they sent some separate disaster assistance programs across. Those went to Senate, and the Senate's position is that we need to pass a five-year Farm Bill instead of just a one-year ad hoc.

The numbers are actually -- you look at the two Farm Bills, there are a lot of differences but there are many similarities as well. We can't predict what's going to happen with the House and how they're going to get the two bills together. Kind of

the big question in D.C. right now is you have a Senate Farm Bill, you have a House Farm Bill; how do you get the two together? The normal process is to wait for the House to pass a bill out of the committee and then you conference, which is you basically get the senior members of the committee and you work out the details and you send it across the House and Senate floor. But it's unclear what's going to happen because of the dynamics in the House.

The two big issues that are going to have resolved. First of all is the cut to the nutrition program. The SNAP program, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program is a big one there. The House would like to see very large cuts out of that program. The House would like to see somewhere, I think it's around \$15 billion. The Senate reduced the spending by \$4 billion. That's going to be a big issue they're going to have to deal with. In the commodity portion, there are some ideological differences in how they operate the Title I program. These would be the programs, your farm safety net programs for corn, soybeans, wheat, et cetera. But actually, there're a lot of similarities. The disaster programs are nearly identical. So, at the end of the day, it's going to come down to how do they work out the budget issue between the two, the House and the Senate.

Timing. The Farm Bill expires in about 45 days. It expires at the end of September. There is not a simple answer

on what happens if the Farm Bill expires. You'll oftentimes hear that it goes back to the '49 bill. I would say -- we're trying to compile for the secretary of a list of exactly what happens, and it's something different for darn near every program. But it will be interesting -- there is obviously a strong need to get a Farm Bill passed between now and then, so that we don't have to worry about that.

One of the things -- I'll give you one example, and this is a very unique example, but -- what happens is each Farm Bill kind of amends permanent law. Permanent law, I think was -- they talk about Farm Bills written in the late '30s and late '40s, and dairy is one very unique example of what happens. Basically, when this Farm Bill expires, we go back to the law that has not expired. We go back to the '49 Act. Well, the '49 Act says that we pay between 75 and 90 percent of the parity price of milk. The parity price of milk today is \$51. The farmers are receiving about \$16 probably right now. So, if -- and it's very unlikely, but if Congress couldn't agree, buy a dairy. Because what would happen is -- I say that very jokingly. But what happens is by law, USDA has to get the price between 75 and 90 percent of \$51. And to do that, we have to do different things.

But that's just a crazy example, my point being that if the Farm Bill expires and Congress doesn't act within a certain

amount of time, some very odd things will happen, and it's going to be different for every single program. I think Chris has programs where payment limits go away; Juan in FSA, with the commodity programs. It's just all over the board. So, the secretary is pushing hard to encourage Congress to get a Farm Bill passed so the farmers know the rules of the game for the next five years.

One of the added benefits, again, the Farm Bill goes along with what Karis talked about, both bills have pretty good provisions especially for livestock producers who are suffering grazing losses. And you look at the map of the United States and, geez, three-quarters of the United States where cattle are grazing are suffering right now. So, one of the benefits of getting the Farm Bill passed is those programs will be there.

I believe we have about 10 minutes left. Happy to have Karis up here take questions, comments, or any other thoughts on Farm Bill or any other topic that you'd want to bring up, Janie.

Juan Garcia: Hey, Brandon. Sorry. I'm supposed to say who I am, okay. Juan Garcia.

Joanne Mounce Stancil: For the minutes. For the minutes.

Juan Garcia: Several times during the last couple of days -- and I think Gerald has brought up the American Indian Feed Act or Feed Program that same about here several years ago. From what I understand, the funding for that program expired at

some point, and I think Gerald has brought it up as far as a program that would really help Indian Country. Do you remember that program?

Brandon Willis: Was this one of those operated in the Dakotas about two or three years ago, or is this a different one?

[CD4 Track 3]

Mark Wadsworth: It actually came from surplus grain and the Congress allocated a portion of that grain to Indian reservations for [indiscernible] feed programs. And it was basically triggered by federal council and county [indiscernible]. But it actually delivered the grain to the reservation and was allocated to individual tribal members. And then you can either get the [indiscernible], whatever you choose.

And at then some point they came back to you and said, you guys want grain or money? Somewhere [indiscernible] money which [indiscernible] it becomes exactly what you were just talking about; it's a target for -- if it's a [indiscernible] sitting on a Blackfeet Indian Reservation [indiscernible], Cherokee [indiscernible] helping with the disaster as opposed to a federal chunk of money going through the process [indiscernible]. But that was the program.

Brandon Willis: What we'll do is --

Mark Wadsworth: Basically it's still -- as one of our IAC [indiscernible] center, it's still a program, but it's a nonfunded program. [Indiscernible].

Brandon Willis: Let me find out if [cross-talking].

Juan Garcia: I just thought you might -- I just thought I'd bring it up here while we were --

Brandon Willis: Just to provide -- I can't speak specifically about that one. But generally speaking on the drought -- in the middle of June, we started updating the secretary on the situation. At that point in time, it was clear that if rains came, things will be fine; if rain didn't come, we were headed for a tough year. Unfortunately, it's been a tough year.

But what the secretary said towards the middle-end of June is work with everybody and he wanted us to have ready to go any authority we had to provide help to people suffering from drought, he wanted us to provide it. And you've seen across the month of July different announcements have been made.

One of the authorities that we used to provide a lot of disaster assistance is based upon what is called Section 32. Section 32 basically, what it said is we had the authority to restore purchasing power of producers. And the way that's been used is often through ad hoc disaster programs to producers. Unfortunately, in the last appropriations bill, Congress

specifically said that that authority in Section 3 of Section 32 was rescinded. What that means is our hands are tied pretty tight on what we can do right now, and the things that the secretary has announced, delaying crop insurance payments for 30 days without interest opened up a lot of CRP lands, reducing the reduction in CRP lands, all the NRCS stuff; all those things are basically what we feel is as far as we can go. In fact, some of those, I think, we're pushing the envelope, to be blunt, on what we can do with those. So, this may be an example of something we could've done previously and we can't do now, but I can't say. We'll find out and get back to you.

Juan Garcia: Yes, we'll go back and check out that particular program.

Brandon Willis: We've hit a lot of dead-ends on what we could've done before and what we can do now.

Juan Garcia: I'm not sure if it was the '96 Bill that had it. The 1996 Bill may have had it.

Mark Wadsworth: If I may.

Joanna Stancil: Mark, please. Mark really knows.

Mark Wadsworth: Yes. It was a total separate appropriation in which the tribes came to Congress and got it passed, and I believe that was back in the early '80s, '82-'83 time period, maybe in '84, and that was the whole aspect of Congress' first question of why within the USDA do we have all

these programs available to people and why isn't Indian participation happening on that in that scenario. And that's really the kind of kickoff to, I think, why we're here today. And if I can ask you another question, you were saying that basically the Farm Bills are just basically amendment bills to the previous bills?

Brandon Willis: I think that's a simplification. I think I simplified it that way, but yes, in large part, they say, for this date to this date, the '38 Act is not in force for certain programs.

Mark Wadsworth: Because in addition to the Farm Bill, you have other bills that are passed. Like for the risk management agency, I know at one time you had a separate bill that went through that enhanced or was a part of the Farm Bill or was its own separate legislation. But what I'm getting at is I believe that the Conservation Reserve Program was its own legislation also. And the problem that we're running into in Indian country within that CRP law is that you, under the statute, it is saying that you are bringing the 25 percent limitation on a county-wide basis and you're ignoring the boundaries of the reservations.

So, when we have applied in the past for Conservation Reserve Program, we have four counties that intersect our boundaries, we were here first for a long time before the states and also the counties, is that we're having to adhere by the

county standard, and what we found out, just to say something, to make a long story short, because other people have heard this before, was that we had four to six percent of our reservation land, eligible land into CRP, but the surrounding counties had 37 percent because they got the waivers. So, basically, what they were utilizing was Indian land base for the benefit of non-Indian producers within the county. So, I guess what I'm saying -- and my question is, can we approach -- I guess, it's already went through the Senate for the committee and floor -- can we approach the House to do an amendment to that 1985, '86 CRP Bill to, say, tribes and counties, or something to that wording. Would that be an option?

Brandon Willis: I follow you now. That's a really good question. Let's get back to you on that. And the reason I say that is what I would like to know is it written so tight in the statute that it couldn't be amended through regulations? And I don't know the answer to that.

Juan Garcia: Well, we're going to go back and look at that, Brandon. I mean, we'll go back and look at that particular reg and see if --

Brandon Willis: What state are you from? Idaho?

Mark Wadsworth: Idaho.

Brandon Willis: That was where it was an issue two years ago, I remember.

Mark Wadsworth: Because currently right now we're being denied again. Even though we're not even at the 25 percent limitation, they're still saying that they're not going to renew our contracts because the county is above the 25 percent.

Brandon Willis: [Indiscernible] areas? Yes.

Mark Wadsworth: Thank you.

Brandon Willis: Thank you.

Joanna Stancil: Are there any other questions or comments? Thank you. I appreciate that.

Juan Garcia: Thank you.

[CD4 Track04]

Joanna Stancil: All right. Janie?

Janie Hipp: How much time do I have, Joanna?

Joanna Stancil: Excuse me?

Janie Hipp: How much time do I have?

Joanna Stancil: Well, we're actually at the limit of your section now but --

Janie Hipp: Oh, I have no time?

Joanna Stancil: About ten minutes? How's that?

Janie Hipp: Okay. Can I just run through some stuff really fast, and then I'll provide my notes to the note-keeper. Yikes. I had a whole big, long list of things to really kind of walk through. What I will do is --

Joanna Stancil: How much time do you think you need, Janie?

Janie Hipp: Huh?

Joanna Stancil: How much time do you think you need?

Janie Hipp: Ten minutes?

Joanna Stancil: Yes, yes, easily.

Janie Hipp: Okay. We're very tickled to have Joanna as the permanent director of Office of Tribal Relations, and nobody's more tickled than I am. Because when the secretary created the Office of Tribal Relations in his office suite, it was -- we had a team, but I was doing a senior advisor on tribal relations to him as well as trying to get the office set up and Joanna is now looking through all the files and seeing how many things I left incomplete. So, I hope she won't expose me in this setting. But, we're still transitioning.

But we've been very honored and very happy to get a lot of things, I think, done in this first couple of years that the office has been up. And one of them is the reason why we're sitting here, settlement of Keepseagle. That's obviously was very first on our list. Creation of the council -- there's a whole lot of documentation that's in your books that all has to be cleared and re-cleared and re-cleared again. I mean, there're just a lot of steps to getting that done, so we're very thankful you're here.

We've worked so closely with Chris, I can't even tell -- Chris is like my new brother, and we just call each other all the time. The relationship we have with FSA is probably, I think, as strong as it could possibly be. We rely on each other. If I get wind of something that doesn't sound right, I'd call him or e-mail him and he solves it in the next 30 minutes. So, I want us to keep that in mind because he is a resource and FSA is -- Juan has not been so long on your job, but Bruce before you, and Karis and -- I mean, it's just -- Jonathan. We've had just a string of people through FSA that we've worked really closely with.

We've worked with the offices of chiefs of staff and all of the undersecretary and deputy undersecretary offices throughout all the 17 agencies and the 20-plus offices of the department to get new guidance to them on how to do consultation with tribes, tribal governments, what are the relationships between our federal government agencies and tribal governments, how do intertribal organizations and intertribal political organizations all fit into this. We've worked on an action plan that was delivered to the White House about how we were going to do a better job across all of consultation issues.

When we -- we're very much still, very much into that. But I can tell you that just from the perspective of being with everybody for so long in the last several years doing this that

Food and Nutrition Service doesn't even tell us anymore what they're doing. They just go do it. They have quarterly consultation, teleconferences with tribal headquarters and their nutrition people. It just regularly occurs and they just kind of let us know what's happening, and they don't seek our approval or guidance anymore, they just do it. And to me, that's where we all need to be, and all the agencies really need to be, carrying out their own programs in that context of what kind of make sense to them. Each one of them have different -- we have agencies that have 300 people and agencies that have 17,000 people. And so, everybody's got to iterate that in a way that works well for tribal governments but also doesn't break the back of that particular agency. We've got to do it together and we've got to be coordinated.

We actually tried -- we experimented with the concept of joint consultation in regional venues across bodies of rules with multiple agencies involved. And I remember a couple of years ago when we actually did that for the first time, I thought we were going to get skewered. I thought the tribal headquarters were just going to come unglued and kill us. There were a few tribal headquarters that really did not want to be doing consultation in that way, but for the most part, I would say 75 to 80 percent of the tribes that participated said thank you for getting yourself organized and being with us in a

deliberative way, having the right staff people there with the right agencies that interrelate. Because, like I said yesterday, if you want to do food procurement of traditional foods, you've got to have three agencies in the room. You can't do it just one agency because they don't have all the answer.

So, we're thinking that as we get a Farm Bill, we will roll out joint consultation again in a way that has a ramp-up and actually has a series of conference calls and webinars and teleconferences and telephone calls to individual tribal headquarters, but really walks people through what the Farm Bill really says after we get it, and then tries to coordinate it in a way that does not break the budget of the tribal headquarters either. We have to be mindful of that.

We're working more closely with NCAI as they reported this morning. It's our intention to be at their mid-year and at their annual meetings with USDA resource rooms in every single one of those meetings. And if we do that, then we can deploy across the whole department and have multiple staffs kind of there to do one on one, strategizing and problem solving.

We helped BIA and BIE launch Let's Move! in Indian country, and we are very proud of that. There's a whole lot that we can do there. Food and Nutrition Services our primary partner within the department on Let's Move! We've worked very closely with the FDPIR program managers, all 200-plus of them, and

talked to them on the phone a lot and really try to work closely with them. RD is just one of those constant needs in Indian country, the infrastructure for communities as well as any kind of ag business infrastructure.

And our office is open, not 24/7, almost, and we've just entertained multiple tribal delegations all the time, sometimes back to back, all day long, but it's so exciting to do that, and it's very gratifying for us to be able to reach out to the departments kind of working parts and it's like, "Can you be with us?" And they just drop everything and they come. And so, we can't always solve the problem right then and there but we've been about the business of trying to do better.

An 85 percent increase in one year of last year of NRCS funding that's gone into Indian country. We absolutely hope, and NRCS does too, that we can continue that upward climb, that's very important.

Over 2000 tribal consultation events in the last two years. So, that's a lot. Not just us, or we would not be standing here, but it's throughout the whole department, and I think that kind of speaks to you, I hope, about how serious we are. And I've always told tribal leaders, we're not perfect. We're not going to do this right and we're not going to be perfect, but at the end of the day, we're going to bother you, we're going to be in your business, and we're going to try to be there and try to

solve problems with you and your communities. And that's our message, is we're late to the game, we haven't had massive amounts of consultation going on for years and years and years like some other departments but we intend to dominate the landscape at some point, and I think we're on our way for that.

Anyway, we're trying to also raise the education level of our own employees about Indian country at large and train them that when they go out to a consultation where they sit with a specific tribal council, they darn sure better read that treaty before they get there. It's those little things of just understanding people's history and understanding what's important and understanding protocol, and it's just that. And we still have, again, a lot of work to do.

[CD4 Track 5]

Janie Hipp: I think one of the most important things we've been able to do, and the secretary put this in place early on, is the Office of Tribal Relation sees all regulation plans. We see what Chris and his folks are planning before they even start drafting. And so, all the reg plans, all the regulation plans come through our office to just get a look-see, kind of what's coming down the pike so we can reach back out to Chris and say, "What are you all thinking about your consultation piece in the context of that rule? How are you thinking it's going to roll out?" And then we see it as they become -- as they go over to

the Federal Register and go over to OMB, we see them before they go.

And we have stopped some rules. It's not always pleasant. Because when things are at the final stage, everybody's just [inaudible]. But we've done that and we have the power to do that, and the secretary has backed us up on that, the agency heads like Juan and Karis have backed us up, and everybody wants to get it right. And so, I think having us in the reg line up, both in the planning stages as well as before they head out the door to be final is very, very important.

I will tell you my most important work, although I did have a waterworks this morning with FFA, the most important work our office has done has been with IAC and with the Tribal Technical Assistance Network. And so, all of the Technical Assistance folks here, thank you very much for being willing to be passionate. And Zach, you're a terrific leader of them and they have been so, like, sponges.

When the agreement started, we brought them all in into D.C. as well as into regional locations. They've been trained regularly by the whole agencies, all of the agencies have occasion to do a deep dive on issues. And Chris, he's like a phone call or an e-mail away to solve a particular person's problem. That's how seamlessly we want it to work. And we have a weekly training teleconference with all the network providers,

and that way we keep them up to speed about what's coming up; we get their input about what they're seeing weekly; and we do training, we do training literally every week. And so, thank you guys. And you've met them. I hope you've gotten to know some of them. They're very passionate and very energetic, and I just love that they're out there, and I think the agencies appreciate that as well.

We've had a series of White House Rural Council Roundtables after the general roundtable on economic development that Kim hosted. She then hosted one that was specific to Native American food and agriculture. That roundtable has now been followed by roundtables at Cherokee Nation, in Colorado hosted by the Southern Ute. Navajo was there. And then we got to tour Napi after that. Shoshone-Bannock, they all -- I was just in Idaho for one. I was just in Spokane for one. We had one at Poarch Creek. We've got one coming up in Leech Lake. There's one coming up in North Dakota. I get no sleep. Did I mention that? But it's very, very important, because to keep them the momentum and the conversations going, and almost to a roundtable they aren't just one tribe. Their multiple tribes are there in the room talking about these issues.

Topics and themes, I'm going to just rip through these and I will provide you a list, okay? Topics and themes that have come up at these roundtables are the following -- and each one

of these, we can do an hour-long discussion: slaughter capacity in Indian country. Irrigation capacity -- I know, you're -- yes, Gil's [sounds like] all over that one.

The need for an agricultural infrastructure development fund, some body of resources somewhere that can be put to ag infrastructure, and that's everything from irrigation to packing, storage sheds to anything you can imagine that would help bolster and support ag businesses.

Everyone, to a person, brings out the need for technical assistance. More, more, more extension, education, all of those pieces that are very, very important.

Distance to food. The remoteness of our communities and the need to really think about food in a local-regional context, to build more local food that's available, literally, locally. We have some reservations that have one grocery store in the middle of a place the size of Connecticut. Really. I mean, that's a complex problem to tackle but it's that.

Leasing issues. Some of our things that have been brought up, of course, have BIA implications. Maintaining areas use for gathering our traditional foods, making sure that those areas are protected and not exposed to basically poachers is what people have called folks who go into those traditional areas and take the traditional foods and use them for commercial purposes for their own gain, very much a complex issue.

Continue support of food programs; water infrastructure improvement; managing our horse populations -- that's already been brought up; fishing economic development, economic development focused around fishing industries; focus on diet, nutrition, and health, nutrition education; again, always, ever present, access to credit issues; difficulty in addressing Indian trust land issues and using those lands for ag purposes. These are themes that we already talked about.

The need for comprehensive water and land use analysis reservation by reservation; the need for offices or access to offices or USDA folks somehow. I don't know what that looks like and it kind of differs place to place, but everyone realizes that they need to reach out and touch somebody.

Value added, packaging and processing as it relates to economic opportunities; marketing of Indian ag products; getting approvals for ag development of lands; access -- youth, youth, youth. That's a constant theme, every roundtable, youth come to the floor.

The need for tribes to work intertribally to solve these ag issues. We constantly get 638 issues but none of USDA has 683 authority. That comes up a lot.

The need for standardized forms when foreclosure has to happen. There's a difference in the forms between FSA and RD. How can we make that one and the same?

And Mark brought it up just a while ago, how can we massage our programs so that they focus on tribal areas as opposed to just county areas. The importance of our traditional foods, medicinals, et cetera, and the need for more conservation programs on Indian lands.

So, what we're doing as a result of these roundtables is compiling all the minutes coming up with themes for each one. They are all being reduced to writing. They all will be transmitted to the White House. Tony and I -- and that is our job -- is to work on those together, get those back to the host tribes and then just keep that, and then keep you all. You will receive copies of all of the basic minutes and themes from each one of the roundtables, and as we continue to do those, you will continue to receive. So, check your e-mail box, Porter.

And then the last thing I wanted to ask you, if you could consider doing as a council, and I realize I'm on the council, if you could please consider moving forward with a set of recommendations to the secretary as soon as possible. I don't think, my personal opinion -- and this is me having my little pitch during my time here -- I don't think we need to wait a year to send him recommendations. I think we already know of so many things that have arisen out of this meeting that -- and I'm not sure how we do that. I just know that the secretary wants to see a constant stream -- this is me telling you, the

secretary wants to see a constant stream of recommendations from this council. He doesn't want it to be something that languishes. He wants it to be active, doing, and communicating with him all the time. I'm available to you anytime in my other capacity, but right now, I'm going to sit down.

Joanna Stancil: Does anyone have any questions? She's going to be with you, so you can answer them. Okay. Thank you very much. All right. Thanks, Janie.

Jerry McPeak: Thank you. Jerry McPeak. We're not seeking an answer but answers.

Joanna Stancil: Does anybody -- if I do this, I have to have a promise and commitment in writing or oath or whatever that you'll come back right away. Do you need a break before we go into the elections? There are refreshments. Get up at your pleasure, bring one back, be comfortable.

[CD4 Track 6]

Male Voice: Joanna, if we could have your attention please, we'll begin.

Joanna Stancil: All right. Welcome back, everybody. Thank you. If we could have everyone's attention, we'll get the council meeting started again. Thank you.

Male Voice: We are going to veer off the agenda for just a moment. So, please just bear with us if you guys do not mind.

Well, I've been with the Office of Tribal Relations now for about a year and a half, well, over a year and a half now, and we've seen a lot of people go and a few come, in that order, and today ends your time here with us. But this is not for you, council members, sorry.

We have two interns who have been with our office over the summer, and we want to take the time to recognize these two individuals. They have been, I guess they've been a godsend, I guess, I could say. As we were gearing up to prepare for this council, which we've been discussing ever since December, all I could think about was all these binders that I'm going to have to put together, and I'm going to have to write, and the by-laws I'm going to have to write. But I'm going to say this: They've definitely come along, they've done a great job. They are part of the FFA family, [indiscernible] and Janie, we're speaking about earlier today, and they are definitely -- we're going to miss -- I know that Joanna and myself are going to miss them extremely.

Joanna Stancil: Cry like a baby.

John Lowery: I'm already trying to figure out who's going to go down and get me something to drink from the cafeteria. True story.

But we want to call Jasmine and Jory [phonetic] up. We have something for them. And Tony, Janie, Joanna, and myself

have a card for them to, sort of, let them know just how much we've appreciated them. And also, we have a gift for you as well from Janie. So, we just wanted to provide you, ladies with us. We don't have time [sounds like], come on, come on. Jory, this is your card. Jasmine, this is your card. And Jory, that is yours, and Jasmine, this is yours.

So, Jory is Jerry McPeak's daughter, and that's the way that I introduce her. She's been a wonderful help to us. She's always laughing and smiling, and she says, "What do you want me to do?" I'll say, "No, this is okay." That's it. But we appreciate you, and I truly thank you for helping us out and for being a real pleasure to be around, and I mean that sincerely. And I have picked on these two girls a lot. As a former high school teacher, that's what I do; I pick on teenagers.

Jasmine is actually a member of the Lumbee Tribe just like I am, and it was no conspiracy. She was one of two FFA members who applied and our office said, "Come on." And Jasmine, she just graduated from high school and she'll be starting college in just a few days. Jory will be in sophomore in college as well. And both of these ladies have done a great job. When I was out on summer break, they were there for us. When Joanna was off at dentist appointments, they were there for us, and we just really appreciate them. And thank you, ladies. And Joanna, if you want to say something, go ahead.

Joanna Stancil: Well, I've just been really pleased to have them around. They're fun to work with, they're smart, they represent what we're fighting for. And I've actually used Jasmine in a meeting that when I was talking to other USDA folks about the "Seventh Generation" concept, making your decisions wisely and how they're going to impact, and I turned around and I looked at Jasmine and I said, "If you can look in her eyes and you can make a decision based on what you can live with that's best for her and the generations to come from her and Jory, then maybe you've made a sound decision. If you can't look in her eyes and do that, maybe you should go back to the decision-making table." And that's who we're fighting for. And they've been wonderful -- and I don't want to cry like a baby -- and I'm going to miss them. But they're already scheming and plotting on how they can stay involved with our office, and they will, and we hope they'll come back if we have another summer opportunity or any other intern opportunities, we'd love to have them back.

John Lowery: Thank you, girls.

Joanna Mounce Stancil: All right. We're at that time, a very important milestone in this very new council, and that is the election of your chair and your vice chair. The chair is -- we went over the roles on Monday, but the chair is the person that will work, in most cases, the direct contact between the

council and myself as the designated federal official for USDA on this advisory committee. The vice chair will fill in for the chair in the absence of him or her.

And so, as you think about who you want to nominate -- hopefully you found the nomination forms that you were given on Monday that were handed out and we can use that. I'm in a little quandary on how to handle this part of it, but if there is anybody -- I guess, at this point, if there's anybody that would like to pull their name off the table for consideration, we'll go ahead and accept those at this time and then we can do the ballot nominations.

Male Voice: [Indiscernible] where that came from. I'm with Jerry's permission withdrawing my name as the chairman.

Joanna Mounce Stancil: Okay. Sorry to hear that.

Female Voice: You're talking about the nominations for --

Joanna Mounce Stancil: For chair, yes.

Female Voice: For today and not the whole list?

Joanna Mounce Stancil: Well, -- pardon. I'm sorry?

Female Voice: You're talking about the nominations that we did on day one?

Male Voice: We're going to start over.

Joanna Mounce Stancil: We're going to start over. Yes, we're going to start over. [Indiscernible].

Male Voice: [Indiscernible] the e-mails [indiscernible] a federal official couldn't be nominated and now they can?

Joanna Mounce Stancil: Every member of the council, whether a non-federal employee or a federal employee are treated equally under the charter and the settlement. So, everybody has full voting rights, full participatory rights in the council. Sir, Porter.

Porter Holder: I want to nominate Mark Wadsworth. Mark, I've been very impressed with your [indiscernible] every program USDA has and [indiscernible], I will nominate you as the chairman.

Angela Sandstol: Joanna, I'll second the nomination.

Joanna Mounce Stancil: Okay. Second by Angela.

Gilbert Harrison: [Indiscernible]. I think the chair [indiscernible] very important role. I think they should be proactive and I think there needs to be, I guess, [indiscernible], so I think [indiscernible].

Male Voice: Since you don't have anything else [indiscernible].

Joanna Mounce Stancil: We can -- I was planning on doing it a closed ballot, but if you want to put the names out, Porter has nominated Mark Wadsworth for chair? Are there any other nominations? If you would prefer to turn those in via close

ballot, we can accept that and move forward, or we had a second
--

Female Voice: Yes, he needs to accept.

Male Voice: For Gilbert, I would be more than happy to
devote the time and the dedication to that.

Joanna Mounce Stancil: Gilbert?

Male Voice: Anyone second to close the nomination.

Mary Thompson: Second.

Joanna Mounce Stancil: Okay. You've made my life so easy.
All right. Second. That was -- make a note that Mary seconded
it to close the nomination. As that, we have Mark Wadsworth as
the candidate for chair of the Council for Native American
Farming and Ranching. Are there any oppositions? Nomination
carries, and Mark, you are the chair.

Mark Wadsworth: Thank you.

Joanna Mounce Stancil: Okay. I've been reminded by Jerry,
we probably should have a voice vote. So, now we're at least --
okay. Go ahead. So, ayes?

All: Aye.

Joanna Mounce Stancil: In oppositions, no's? No
oppositions made? Again, congratulations, Mark.

Mark Wadsworth: Thank you again.

[End of transcript]