



United States  
Department of  
Agriculture

Council for Native American Farming and Ranching Meeting  
December 9, 2016

Mark Wadsworth: Good morning. Today is December 9th, Friday. Las Vegas. Council for Native American Farming and Ranching meeting, the second day of our meeting. We'll start out with a call to order. I'll start with Leslie Wheelock.

Leslie Wheelock: Present.

Mark Wadsworth: Angela Peter. Angela Peter is not here. Jerry McPeak. Jerry McPeak is not here. Connie Holman.

Connie Holman: Here.

Mark Wadsworth: Gilbert Louis.

Gilbert Louis: Gilbert Louis, present.

Mark Wadsworth: Mark Rose.

Mark Rose: Present.

Mark Wadsworth: Tawney Brunsch. Tawney Brunsch is not here. Sherry Crutcher.

Sherry Crutcher: Here.

Mark Wadsworth: Carlos Martin Rios [phonetic]. Carlos Martin Rios is not here. Sarah Vogel.

Sarah Vogel: Here.

Mark Wadsworth: Erin Parker.

Erin Parker: Present.

Mark Wadsworth: Roselynn Yazzie.

Roselynn Yazzie: Present.

Mark Wadsworth: Okay. We do have a quorum. We'll start today's meeting.

Leslie Wheelock: Mr. Chairman, this is Leslie. If I may, we also have another council member named Shannon McDaniel. Shannon is not present.

Mark Wadsworth: Okay. Thank you. Also we'll start the meeting off with a blessing. Gilbert Louis offered to make that this morning. Please stand if you can.

Gilbert Louis: Good morning, everybody. Please bow your heads. I'll do half of it in my native tongue and also half in English.

Good morning, everybody. Heavenly Father, please bless our meeting and our agenda for today. Keep everybody safe. May our meeting go well and may we be productive and have a good meeting. Watch over us as everybody travels home to their families and keep our loved ones protected at home. Our animals and the land, may it be all prosperous. May we have good success for our agenda today and also for the years to come for the Native American Farming and Ranching Council. Just keep all the blessings coming to our families and for the holidays, the New Year. Bless us also with happiness, love, health, and success. Amen.

Mark Wadsworth: Thank you, Gilbert. I'm going to review, we just had a change in the agenda. We have a new agenda in front of us right now. After we finish with the review, we'll go to the review of the travel information that Joshua Griffin needs for you guys to get your reimbursements back. And then we'll go into item 4 or 5, which will be Council for Native American Farming Working Session. We'll go through and review the last previous recommendations.

Then we'll do the subcommittee discussion to bring everybody up to date on that progress and how that's been working. We can also during that timeframe discuss council issues and other topics, discuss our goals and transition plan for the new term of 2016-2018. We do have a scheduled break for 15 minutes. Then we'll re-adjourn hopefully around 10:00. And then on item 8, we'll go through the census of the 2017 announcement. We'll handle a state statistician. NASS will be doing that presentation.

Then we'll have an update from the Intertribal Ag Council's Zach Ducheneaux. We usually have those at every meeting. Also, the Natural Resources Conservation Service update from Mark Rose. And then we'll break for lunch. Our next one will be just basically for the afternoon a working session until everyone is satisfied. And then we'll probably adjourn. With that, we'll review the travel information from Josiah.

Josiah Griffin: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Along with the ethics packet that I handed out to everyone yesterday morning, I also handed out a travel procedures for out-of-town travelers' sheet. The U.S. Department of Agriculture pays for each of your airfare upfront. That is an arrangement that we can make. We are also able to reimburse for airfare that is at a similar or equivalent rate to what we would be able to procure for you through our government procurement contracts.

We are able to reimburse for hotel at the agreed upon rate. For the Flamingo Hotel, that is \$57 per day plus the resort fee and any taxes that come along with that rate. We also offer a per diem rate at a general services administration rate of \$64 per day. For the first and the last day that we are able to authorize your travel, that is the day before and the day after this meeting, that per diem rate is three-quarters of the total rate, so \$48 for the day of arrival and \$48 for the day of departure.

We request that you submit your hotel receipts, any taxi receipts to and from the airport, or mileage to and from the airport, at your earliest convenience to both Cynthia Eaton and myself. Our travel office usually does a phenomenal job of making sure that you're reimbursed promptly, typically within I would say five to seven business days. When you submit your receipts, please keep an eye out for the travel signature form

that we'll be sending back to you, authorizing us to send in that direct deposit to your account. Does anyone have any questions?

Sherry Crutcher: Yeah. I didn't get a receipt when we came out here on the cab. But it was like \$17.50 from the airport to the Flamingo. I'm wondering would that suffice if I got one going back because I didn't think to get one when we came?

Josiah Griffin: Certainly. For that, because we understand that there are differences in taxi fare, we would request some kind of notice. Typically, what members have done before is they would submit part of their bank account statement with everything else blacked out except for that charge that you're --

Sherry Crutcher: But I paid cash. I just paid cash, you know.

Leslie Wheelock: Josiah?

Josiah Griffin: Yes, ma'am.

Leslie Wheelock: That's under \$25. Isn't it sufficient for her to just note what it was? It's within the range that most people pay here.

Josiah Griffin: Yes, ma'am. Thank you for clarifying that. That was Leslie. On the back of this sheet, there is a form, and Leslie is correct, as long as this is under \$25, many

were able to mark that information on to the sheet and submit it alongside your receipts. So does anyone else have any questions?

Mark Wadsworth: Also with the new council, for the producers and staff, we used to have \$100. Is that still in effect for those people?

Josiah Griffin: Yes, sir. From what Mr. Wadsworth, the chair, is saying, we do allow up to \$100 per day for time missed off of work. That is a separate arrangement to travel. But if you are interested in receiving that amount where that time is off of work, please let me know and we can work with our travel office. Please note that that is pending, that we have money in the budget. And so I believe for this meeting that that is the case, that we do have sufficient funds for that payment.

Mark Wadsworth: Just for the record, my resolution reads from my tribe that I'm the representative from them, so I just basically take travel. I will not be requesting any compensation back. I'm already being paid.

Josiah Griffin: Thank you, sir.

Mark Wadsworth: Alrighty. Any other further questions? Okay. Here we go into the next working session. I believe we should just go back to our sheet again. Anybody remembered the exact number where we stopped?

Connie Holman: Mr. Chairman?

Mark Wadsworth: Yes, Connie.

Connie Holman: This is Connie Holman. I promised an update on the plain language guide to Ms. Vogel yesterday. I emailed Mr. Radintz and he's answered me back. That guide is still in clearance. I know that seems like that's a long process. We did have to pull it back and do some updates when we did the new FO [phonetic] microloan. It is still in clearance. He informs me that it should be ready for distribution at the end of January instead of the end of December.

Sarah Vogel: That's still in time for the peak loan season, isn't it?

Connie Holman: Yes, ma'am. Usually our peak loan season runs usually from January through April or May. We should still be able to get that out.

Sarah Vogel: If you can remember, could you send a copy to us on the council?

Connie Holman: Yes, ma'am. As soon as it gets through final clearance, we'll make sure and get that to Josiah and get that out to everybody on the council.

Sherry Crutcher: Just a quick question.

Mark Wadsworth: Yes, Sherry Crutcher.

Sherry Crutcher: FSA loans usually run out of funds around June. Is that going to be the case again this year?

Connie Holman: It is a possibility. I do have one bit of good news, if I may?

Mark Wadsworth: Yes.

Connie Holman: When we're under a continuing resolution, our funding is divided by 365 days. We get whatever the continuing resolution number of days is. If it's 75 days, we get 75 days of funding. That creates an issue if that continuing resolution runs all the way through March because we did more than half of our business during that peak loan season of January through March or April.

We have gotten what they call an anomaly, which allows us to dip in and get not just that percentage but we are able to pull funds, kind of like a draw, on what we think that the appropriation bill will be. We won't run out of funds as early. Both the House and the Senate bill show a slight uptick in funding for the 2017 fiscal year.

With that being said, the uptake they show in funding still is not as much as we obligated last year. We still think unless there is an uptick that is not in the House and Senate bill right now, we may still possibly run out of funds. But I know the secretary has already made the case to Congress about that. Hopefully, we will get some additional funding.

Sarah Vogel: There is a set aside still for socially disadvantaged?

Connie Holman: Yes, ma'am. We have targeted funds and those targets stay on until August and September. Now, sometimes we do pull those but we don't pull them until later in the year.

Sarah Vogel: The authorizations for guarantees, is that also in the continuing resolution?

Connie Holman: Yes, ma'am.

Sarah Vogel: I just want to say for the record that it's still going to be a serious concern that farmers and ranchers on reservations in particular face an incredible shortage of lenders from the private sector or co-op sector. And therefore don't have access to the guaranteed pool of money, which is huge, the big part. This is something that I think is a critically big problem, probably bigger than USDA. But again this might be a beautiful theme for this council to work with, with the Minneapolis Fed. Remind me I said that later.

Roselynn Yazzie: This is Roselynn. Connie, I have a question. I know the private sector, the bankers, because of the commodity prices are taking a very stringent look at their plan of operation, marketing plans, and the economics of these farms. Is that going to be the same case with these loans that are going to be coming off of the USDA?

Connie Holman: Well, we attended the American Bankers Association. We do anticipate an uptick in demand for

guaranteed loans. One of the things, if there are individuals in what we call credit deserts, then even if it might appear that they could obtain credit elsewhere, if there's not a lender there then we can make that loan direct instead of guaranteed. The issue with that is there's such a small limitation when you compare that to the limitation with guaranteed.

FSA is going to be looking at cash flows and things like that. We're a little bit more flexible with prices and yields in taking those kind of things into consideration than the banks are. Because the bottom line, the banks are looking at what's good for business. FSA is looking at what is good for the producer, for the farmer or rancher. While we are looking at cash flows, we're not asset lenders so we're looking for repayment ability, we do have some flexibilities particularly with our servicing options. If someone has a problem making a payment or needs to extend the payment or something like that, we have a number of servicing options available.

The book that Ms. Vogel has been asking about explains those in very simple terms. When we get the copy of that book to the council, I would suggest that you look over that and then if you have producers that are interested, send them in to FSA. We do have a safety net that banks don't have. Did I answer your question?

Mark Wadsworth: Thank you, Connie. Also, Josiah.

Josiah Griffin: Mr. Chairman, thank you. First, I would like to recognize the addition of Ms. Tawney Brunsch. Second, for the purposes of the transcript, I'll just ask everyone to please say their name before providing comment. Thank you.

Mark Wadsworth: Thank you. Well, is there any other thing before we dive into the -- I think we were on item 26 of the recommendations.

Erin Parker: Mr. Chairman. This is Erin. I would just respectfully ask the council that we leave this one open given the funding year to year right now. I think extending a partnership is hard to do if there's no funding for the partnership.

Mark Wadsworth: Anybody opposed or anymore comments? We'll keep it open.

Erin Parker: Thank you.

Sarah Vogel: Does that mean we would amend the completed 2016 in this form? This is Sarah.

Mark Wadsworth: This is agreeable to me, to put it as ongoing or in process. On item 27, for the background of the people that weren't here before, we had an issue where it was brought to our attention that through the Bureau of Indian Affairs, through the Department of Interior, that they wouldn't allow for dual permitting or I guess double cropping for allotted lands. It was brought to the attention. We addressed

that with, I believe at the time we had a representative with BIA, we had actually a BIA person come in, which wasn't too fruitful at the time. I don't know whether we've really gotten a full answer to this deal.

Josiah Griffin: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This is Josiah. I believe what Leslie mentioned yesterday at that, we are still pending response from the Bureau of Indian Affairs.

Sarah Vogel: This is Sarah. We should also note, it's been more than a year or a year. My notes on this is the idea of a discussion is not the same as getting results. So I would not call that completed either. I would even have something different instead of ongoing, just say to be resumed or to be continued.

Erin Parker: This is Erin. I just had a note. It's not the BIA; it's with Secretary Jewell from my notes. That Secretary Jewell hasn't responded. I just wanted to be really, really clear about who hasn't responded and it's the secretary. Sorry, Secretary Jewell. Please respond. Thank you.

Mark Wadsworth: If I may, too, we run across this issue on my reservation. It came down to basically it was the superintendent's decision because we do allow now for dual uses or payments on permits for allotted lands. But I don't know whether this is across the board.

Leslie Wheelock: This is Leslie. This was raised as a result of a BIA lease out of Oklahoma, where the double cropping and cover cropping are prohibited. Growing an additional crop beyond the first crop were prohibited. That in effect, prevented the conservation practices of cover cropping and double cropping.

Secretary Vilsack sent a letter to Secretary Jewell asking her to look into this. Our office has not received an update. I had spoken with the secretary's office two weeks ago on this specific matter to try to figure out how to go back and trace that letter. I think we might have to add that to Deputy Secretary Scuse's list of things to help us track down. We have ways of tracking down secretarial correspondence but if it's not yet in that process, we're not sure how to get to it. That's an OTR to do ASAP because we obviously need to get it done or get a response back soon.

Mark Wadsworth: Thank you. We'll keep it as ongoing then. Item 28, would you like to give a brief background of what that was supposed to be, Sarah, for the people's knowledge?

Sarah Vogel: I would be happy to do so. I touched on it a little bit yesterday with regard to the need to compare the FSA loan data with the census data. So that we could kind of measure, to gauge how good the outreach is, how robust the

process is, where people apply and so on. We never did get that I think from the ombudsperson.

The bigger background is that the Keepseagle Settlement Agreement which was signed in October of 2010, I believe, required in an ombudsperson not just for Native Americans but for all minority borrowers. It took I think about three or four years to appoint someone. Three years to appoint her and then it was two, a year or so, to figure out what she would be doing. And then she started doing stuff and then she left.

Leslie Wheelock: A point of clarification. It did take approximately three years to start and to finish the process of bringing the ombudsperson on board. She came on board with approximately 18 months left in the obligations under the Keepseagle Settlement. Because of the fact that the language in the settlement agreement did not require her to specifically work on tribal matters or Indian country matters, the secretary recently asked her to turn her attention to other areas where we do not have a working council and a settlement that has been as effective in getting some of the things that is in Keepseagle, in his opinion. I do not know what he has directed her to do but she's looking at other statistics in other areas.

Sarah Vogel: Did you ever read any of the old minutes? We brought this up a lot. Even Gilbert who was as peaceful a character as there ever was, was upset. That would be the other

Gilbert, Gilbert. Thank you for the opportunity. I tried to be nice.

Mark Wadsworth: For the most part, at the time that it was over with, we were all okay. Let's just put that as completed. I think the FSA has been doing the job and we are getting the correct information.

Connie Holman: This is Connie Holman. I did talk with Erin yesterday. With that and the information that Ms. Vogel gave me during yesterday's session, I'm going to go back and try to build a report comparing the statistics we have with some NASS data. And see if we can get more of what you're looking for. I think the folks on the FSA Farm Loan Program staff working with NASS can build what you're looking for.

Sarah Vogel: I believe it will be a very, very useful tool to make the loan programs work better. It will work in a non-adversarial way, which is good for all concerned. I'm delighted with that, Connie. Thank you very much.

Mark Wadsworth: Item 29, Leslie, if you don't mind kind of bringing us up to date on that history.

Leslie Wheelock: This is Leslie Wheelock. Item 29 is a recommendation that was made by the council concerning -- there are actually a variety of tribal food code projects going on around the United States. Some of those are involving state offices and a couple are involving USDA. Since this

recommendation or since our last meeting actually, the FDA has established the working group on tribal food codes and on food safety.

The Office of Tribal Relations (OTR) has requested that the Food Service Agency provide Bea Herbert [phonetic] who is a member of the Navajo Nation to work with that group, with that organization. Because of her background, her training, and her education, she is the person that we thought would be most effective in that role. Her agency has agreed to allow her to serve that role on behalf of the department and our office.

Mark Wadsworth: Roselynn, with NAPI, have you ran across any of these?

Roselynn Yazzie: Mr. Chair, this is Roselynn. In our crops that are sold to the food chains, to the grocery chains, what we set in place, this is going on about five or six years now, is we brought in the GLOBALG.A.P. certification. All of our production starting from production, we have GLOBALG.A.P. And into our processing plants, we also have the GLOBALG.A.P. certification. Our organic is also GLOBALG.A.P. certification and every year, on an annual base, we are audit [sic], it's a third party audit, they come in and do their audits. Based on any findings, we are given a certain amount of time to make those corrections. Then they come back and do their inspections.

And we had to also hire an individual, a Navajo from NMSU. She worked with the pecan [sounds like] very familiar with the program. So when we hired her on, she set all of our policies and regulations in place. So the farm itself now is pretty much from production to the end user all GLOBALG.A.P. certification.

If there's anyone out there that needs help setting those in place, I think we'd be more than happy to help them to probably give them a guideline or how we set ours in place, but there's a lot of documentation to keep that in place. The only thing that we are working on right now is the food labeling, so that if it is put in place, that we are ready and ready to label. All of the things are set in place and I think the only thing they're looking at labeling is the GMO. So thank you.

Mark Wadsworth: GLOBALG.A.P. stands for --?

Roselynn Yazzie: GLOBALG.A.P., [indiscernible] GAP is what they call it is - GAP is Good Agricultural Practice and the other one is the Good Manufacturing Practice.

Mark Wadsworth: Thank you. I think this is probably still ongoing then?

Female Voice: Yes.

Mark Wadsworth: Yes.

Sarah Vogel: Mr. Chairman?

Mark Wadsworth: Yes, Sarah?

Sarah Vogel: I would just like to echo or -- I only heard a lot about this when we were in North Carolina and the deep, deep, deep, deep concerns with the smaller producers of which there are a great many. I think the complexities of the process are daunting even for a large organization with staff. So possibly, this might be an issue for the subcommittee to deal with. I know that the food and indigenous policy center has done a lot of work on this. So I would just like to circle back to this one when it comes to subcommittee time.

Mark Wadsworth: Okay. Agreeable. I'll just keep it open. We had a pretty good presentation from FFA yesterday. What's anybody's thought on this?

Sarah Vogel: This is Sarah. It sounded like there were opportunities and that FFA would welcome the opportunity to expand and to reach more Native American youth and establish more agriculture training programs. So I would call it ongoing and conceivably a subcommittee, youth subcommittee or education subcommittee would be a beautiful topic for that kind of committee. It's a future.

Mark Wadsworth: So you want it to stay open?

Sarah Vogel: Oh, yes. Sorry. Yes.

Mark Wadsworth: Any disagreements? Going to keep her open then. On the Native Youth appointment. I'm not sure on this one, if there's been any progress or with the recommendation.

Was this part of the new recommendations that we sent the secretary?

Leslie Wheelock: Mr. Chairman, this is Leslie. All of these from the 30 on down are under the provisional for deliberation comments, which means that they are pending final addressing from the secretary. What we might do is go through and if there's any clarification or if you have any questions about them, we could address those but for now, those are all open.

Mark Wadsworth: And you said from --?

Leslie Wheelock: 30, item 30 forward.

Mark Wadsworth: To all the way down to which -- oh, throughout the whole rest of it. Okay. Understandable.

Sarah Vogel: Not to insult anybody, we don't have anybody here particularly. Was this something that could not be accomplished in this council?

Leslie Wheelock: Is there an age limitation?

Male Voice: [Off-mic] I think it refers in the beginning [inaudible].

Josiah Griffin: So if I may Mr. Chairman?

Mark Wadsworth: Yes, Joshua - Josiah.

Josiah Griffin: Thank you, sir. This is Josiah. So Amanda Burley notified tribal colleges and universities as well as other organizations that partnered with youth trying to

solicit nominations. From what I can recall, there were not any students of technical colleges or of tribal colleges and universities that applied to serve on the council. To the best of our ability, we sought to incorporate those individuals who partnered or worked with youth to help provide a broader representation.

Leslie Wheelock: Mr. Chairman, so, to that, what you see is you have Jerry McPeak who has the program, the youth programs. Angela Peter, one of the organizations she works with in Tyonek has a school garden youth program, farm to school work that they're doing. Erin at the University of Arkansas supports their summer youth program as well as the youth programs that they work with in conjunction with around the country. Who am I leaving out?

Female Voice: Sherry, she helped get 37 youth moms [sounds like] for people in her reservation.

Leslie Wheelock: Right. So what we tried to do, because we didn't have young people applying was to try to bring in their desires, concerns, and wishes through people who work with them.

Mark Wadsworth: And Roselynn, did you say you had a transition from college to the NAPI that was kind of going on also?

Roselynn Yazzie: Mr. Chair, this is Roselynn. Yes, we do. We have an internship program that we make selections on five positions to work through the summer in the production, in the different areas, the water system delivery and other areas from there within the interest that they have. We make another selection, which then we sent them off to NMSU. I think there was one, agronomy study from Oklahoma, out of Arizona also. From there, we provide the funding, put them through school, and then during their time off, they come back to the farm and work in different area of their production.

So at the end of their season or when they graduate, we have a specific position there on the farm that they can fulfill where their interests are. So through the years of their studies, they work on the farm. So for example, we have an NMSU graduate with an Animal Science degree that have taken over the alfalfa crop manager. She oversees the 15,000 acres of alfalfa. This is going to be her second year and she's going to be overseeing it. We have the corn crop manager, the same, he's gone into the potato production. He's done a little bit of wheat and some human resource area. His interest was in production so we moved him into the corn crop manager and this will be his second year.

We have in the first year, a young lady that graduated out of NMSU. We put her in the potato crop manager position.

Again, her interest was in the potato production, in the organic production. This is her first year in the potato production. So we have multiple young farmers that are coming on and filling those and our succession plan is, as we retire, we're moving them and training them to the next position that they could hold. Thank you.

Mark Wadsworth: So just for my clarification, we're wanting an appointment of one individual to a slot or how does this read?

Leslie Wheelock: Seek to appoint. Mr. Chairman, this is Leslie. The language seek to appoint, in my opinion, is to try to find somebody to appoint. We did not reach out to anybody directly and asked them to apply. My daughter is in college and she's in finals right now. So you know, the concept of doing it is great. I don't know how well it would work unless they're out of college. And so I think when we go out and we touch base with everybody that we could who has youth contacts, youth programs, everybody we could think of, not everybody we could probably, that's a seeking to appoint. We were just trying to get people to apply. So we can't appoint them unless they fulfill the requirements of the application.

Mark Wadsworth: Okay. Go ahead, Tawney. Tawney Brunsch.

Tawney Brunsch: This is Tawney. I'm wondering if we should soften language here a little bit if we want to even keep

this on just going forward if we should, say, you know, encourage youth to seek appointments to the council.

Leslie Wheelock: Mr. Chairman, this is Leslie. That's a possibility. There's also the possibility within our bylaws of establishing an ex officio membership and that would relieve the person or team, possibly, of needing to fulfill all of the requirements of the council members. They could miss meetings if they have to, and so on and so forth. It just makes it a little bit easier on them. There are some other options that we could look into for getting that voice here.

The other group that we've been working with is returning veterans. We have our USDA veterans office. The newest detailee over from Small Business Administration is sitting in the Office of Tribal Relations because we have space. We've been having some very good conversations with her about that. So when you start talking about beginning farmers and ranchers, from my perspective, we're talking about tribes that are just getting access to land, that are just getting access to water, people who have never had the ability to farm the land that is on their reservation as well as our youth.

And so, you've got a lot of different groups here, you've got the youth but you've also got the beginners, up and down the age range as well as tribes. If we want to make this more flexible, if we want to put some more words around it, it might

be useful in terms of what we're seeking among all of those different groups. Thank you.

Mark Wadsworth: Yes, Erin -- or Sarah?

Sarah Vogel: Yesterday, I just peeked in the door and I saw that IAC had probably 80 young individuals all paying rapt attention to the speaker who is saying to use their imaginations. It's a beautiful message, and in terms of what they wanted to accomplish with their lives. I think we could ask IAC and their youth program to send a conceivably, even a rotating, designate -- or the summer institute. I believe we would have interest but perhaps, they could come out of those two organizations, at least, initially. I think we could use that insight.

Leslie Wheelock: Mr. Chairman?

Mark Wadsworth: Yes, Leslie?

Leslie Wheelock: I'm happy to reach out to those two organizations and ask them to kind of collectively put their heads together and think of a couple of people that can be approached to service ex officio members of this council.

Mark Wadsworth: I'm open to everyone beginning to do it instead of just two or whatever. Yes, Erin?

Erin Parker: This is Erin. I will consider that outreach from you, Leslie, for the initiative. I can certainly work with our partners at IAC to ensure that we have plenty of folks who

can come through here. We have over 100 youth to our program every summer. Last summer, they represented 51 tribes including folks from Alaska Native villages and Native Hawaiian folks. So we've run the gamut in terms of representation. So I think we can absolutely find some folks.

What was the other I wanted to say? Oh, I had a question. Leslie, if we change the language of that recommendation since it's provisional and pending right now, does that mean you have to go back through a drafting process? Does it slow things down?

Leslie Wheelock: No.

Erin Parker: Okay, perfect. Thank you.

Mark Wadsworth: I'm really glad to hear that there's possibly a veterans portion to this now. My personal story, how I got involved and why I come here, I guess, is that I worked on a farm when I was a young man. When I was the only Native really, that worked on a spud and grain farm during that timeframe. I'd always have the non-Indians say, "Why aren't you guys doing this? Why aren't you farming?" Well, I got interested so I went to college, got my degree, and then I went into the military. And then I served my four and no more.

But anyway, I remember distinctly going back in 1991 stepping into the USDA office after looking for jobs or looking for opportunities and stuff and went in the USDA office. I

stepped up to the counter. Everything was open as open as this, everybody's at their desk. The lady says, the young receptionist, she comes up and she says, "Can I help you?" I said, "Well, you know, I kind of like to look at possibly doing some farming and stuff." And she says, "Excuse me, sir, but are you Indian?" And I said, "Yes, I am. She says, "Well, we don't serve you guys. You've got to go to the BIA." And I said, "Okay."

I didn't get to sign the paperwork, I didn't get nothing to even documentation that I was even there. So I took her word for it. I went down to BIA. Of course they laughed at me. You know, "You want to become a farmer." But it's just one of those barriers that I think that we -- we're not too far away from when they used to deny people. And we've got that work to do. So we're doing stuff for the veterans, I'm all for it also, anything that can help. Yes, Sherry?

Sherry Crutcher: Yeah. With that, that reminds me of your story. Your story reminds me of my story within the early '90s and I did the same thing. I walked into the FSA office. Both my husband and I, we walked in there wanting to get our start because that's the way we were both raised and that's what happened to us too. Basically they said, "No," you know, "You're too young. You don't have anything. We can't help you. Go back and see if your dad can give you a few cows." That type

of deal and that was with me too. I didn't ever. But I wasn't a quitter. I went back, we went to work for the mines and we started building our ranch. Then went back, said, hey, and then they helped us. So it's always been good from that point on, but that's exactly what happens to a lot of people this young. I was really grateful for the young farmers and ranchers because a lot of my youth loan kids came up and that's exactly what I told them. Don't quit. If somebody tells you no, don't go sit in the corner and hide your head. You come out fighting. You find a way. And don't be afraid to ask questions.

So you know, with the youth, it's really important to have somebody to tell them because I've seen a lot of Native people get told no and never try again. They don't have the gumption to say, you know, give me another chance.

Connie Holman: Mr. Chairman, this is Connie. All I want to say is if that ever happens again, you have a direct link either to Mr. Radintz or Ab [phonetic]. And I hope that that's a story from several years back. I hope that's not happening out there anymore because we are really trying to round the corner from those days. I think for the most part, we have. I won't say it -- you know, because as sure as I say it, it's not happening out there anymore, we'll hear that it is. But you've got a direct link to the national office. And all you have to do is pick up the phone.

Mark Rose: This is Mark Rose with NRCS. I'm going to echo what Connie just said. Because there are things happening out there today and it's very frustrating. When I get a call from somebody that this happened to them, I get very upset on this. So please, whether it's the chief or myself or the associate chief, Barry Hamilton, make sure we know about it and where on the agency side.

Female Voice: Thank you.

Mark Wadsworth: All right. We'll go to item 32, Social Media. Anybody have a Facebook update?

Sarah Vogel: Mr. Chairman.

Mark Wadsworth: Yes, Sarah.

Sarah Vogel: I use Snapchat now. Apparently, Facebook is growing outdated. So we might want to add Snapchat to this. I kid but also, I am actually seriously really do. They only use Snapchat now.

Mark Wadsworth: I love the flip phones and now they made me use this. All right, maybe we'll just say something that -- or any current popular media are better now. Not just Facebook, I guess. Thirty-three, anybody have comments on that one? It's about the still in --

Sherry Crutcher: This is Sherry. I've got a note. This is added to the list to get done.

Mark Wadsworth: Okay. So we're on to 34.

Sarah Vogel: Mr. Chairman, this is Sarah. I think we could simply ask that Connie or Mark assign this to the Office of General Counsel of USDA. This is a simple legal research job of what the regulations are with the two agencies. They could do it. It doesn't need to be done. I don't know that this needs to rise to the level of having the secretary partner to create a chart. We look it up. We can do it. And actually, it might be more complex than that because I think the BIA in different regions have different iterations of grazing permits and so forth. Does that sound reasonable? If this is something that could be handled perhaps by the federal members of our council.

Mark Wadsworth: Yeah. Just for everybody's knowledge that isn't aware of the grazing permits, we're a 638 program so we contracted our grazing from the BIA. But in the CFR, you have a section 166. Basically, that addresses all the permitting requirements on grazing, but it also has formal BIA documents that are within their permits that they have. But within the CFR, tribes do have the ability to change those requirements by either resolution or through ordinances. So we've even taken their documents and fashioned them to what our tribe desires within their stipulations of when they can move, when we can tell them to move and situations like that.

So when we're talking about not only the BIA, and I guess what we're talking about the grazing permits would be through the Forest Service if we're talking with the Department of Agriculture because of their lot in the permits. And then the BLM permits. And I've seen them both. They're quite similar in their language. I don't know what we're really trying to kind of accomplish with this. I didn't have a comment on this before because we were on fire because my ranch was burning up at that time.

Sarah Vogel: As I recall, the reason was that this was, again, back to the Forest Service and their grazing practices in not letting Native Americans in the door with the base property issue. So I think it was an attempted gathering research for that so that we would have a better handle on what it was that Native Americans were missing out on by inability to access the Forest Service grazing permits, which are quite nice as I recall.

Mr. Bundy [phonetic] managed to go, what, ten or twenty years without ever paying anything? But I think it was in the package of Forest Service trying to get to the bottom of this Forest Service base property. That's my memory. Leslie?

Leslie Wheelock: What?

Sarah Vogel: Could OGC help us?

Leslie Wheelock: Mr. Chairman, this is Leslie Wheelock. We can ask. I don't know why they couldn't. I don't know why they wouldn't assign it to one of the attorneys to take care of.

Sarah Vogel: Yeah. And if not, we'll just ask Erin.

Erin Parker: This is Erin. If they can't figure it out. I can do it.

Leslie Wheelock: Yeah. They have to learn this one way or another.

Sarah Vogel: It would be kind of fun to have the Forest Service get a call from the OGC.

Mark Wadsworth: Since it's still ongoing, we'll go on to number 35. Thirty-four and thirty-five are pretty similar.

Leslie Wheelock: It looks like even 36 but, oh, it seems [indiscernible].

Mark Wadsworth: They are just pretty much all interconnected and ongoing to 36. Let's go ahead and do 37, unless anybody else has any comments. And the council recommends the secretary or deputy secretary which we did have shown up so I think this pretty much is working and going.

Leslie Wheelock: Well, at least one if we can manage it. There is a concern in the secretary's office that a commitment to do this would result in a commitment in all of the other councils asking for the same thing. And so there's a reluctance to guarantee it, but that doesn't mean that we won't keep asking

for it. So I would actually keep that as an ongoing just to use it as a reminder that the council continues to ask the secretary and/or deputy secretary to come to these meetings. It is easier for them to make the meetings when we're in Washington because otherwise, their schedules don't usually line up with ours. Thank you.

Mark Wadsworth: So with this request, did we actually fulfill one of our two year term? Or are we into the 18 also with the added disability?

Leslie Wheelock: I'm sorry?

Mark Wadsworth: We're in 2016, we had the person show up. I guess 2017-2018 would be our final year to have someone show up.

Leslie Wheelock: I don't know why there's a limitation.

Mark Wadsworth: Yeah. Well, the council, whether it's reauthorized after 2018. I guess I just want to make sure that we've already gotten from them the first year of this request that we've made for this term.

Leslie Wheelock: So we've got per calendar year would mean that we fulfilled it for 2016 but not 2017 and not 2018.

Mark Wadsworth: Okay. That's what I wanted to know. Thank you.

Leslie Wheelock: Okay.

Sarah Vogel: Mr. Chairman and Leslie.

Mark Wadsworth: Yes, Sarah.

Sarah Vogel: Would it be more palatable to the secretary or the deputy secretary, the new ones coming in, if it were written in a way that it would be the council will invite? In other words, we would just invite the secretary or the deputy secretary, and then it wouldn't even need to be a recommendation. We would just have to have that be part of our protocol.

Leslie Wheelock: This is Leslie again. I think that is completely helpful. Because very often, we will send out, say, the dates and we'll send out notices. But what doesn't end up is the actual invitation from the chairman to the secretary inviting him or her to join the next meeting. And that can be delegated to the deputy secretary if the secretary so chooses.

Mark Wadsworth: Okay. Thirty-eight. I think we had a primary example of that when the person called in yesterday that this is being addressed.

Connie Holman: This is Connie Holman. Mr. Radintz and myself and the other two directors have a meeting set up for Tuesday. I've got a list of several things that we talked about here, including the call that came in yesterday. And this mediation question is also on there. So we'll have a meeting on that and I'll try to get an answer back to Josiah and he can send that out to you.

Mark Wadsworth: Sarah.

Sarah Vogel: I used to run one of the state mediation programs in the way back. I know that they're still out there. They're rusty. I think they're rusty because times have been pretty good, prices have been great. Prices are no longer good. Prices are no longer great. And so I think we have to be very proactive in terms of making sure that these state mediation programs, which are generally run by state agriculture departments, and state agriculture departments, we have never seen one here at this meeting.

I spoke several years ago to the collective state departments of agriculture and said I think you guys should make it a point to go to tribes and deal with their pesticide programs, their noxious weed programs, whatever. And they all, a room full of let's say white guys, they all looked at me like, and why would we do that? And I know what they were thinking. The BIA does that. So they get funding, I believe, from USDA. Is that still the case?

Connie Holman: This is Connie. There are 38 mediation. I think 38 states have mediation programs. And yes, those mediation programs do get funding through FSA. That is correct.

Sarah Vogel: I think that they could use a serious reminder that they have to offer their services without any

discrimination and have outreach to all of the communities like the reservations.

Connie Holman: Okay. All right. Like I said, this is on my list to take back. And just as a side note, just this week, I did get a notice that that group of folks, the state, they're meeting in D.C. this year in January. So it might be an opportunity for somebody to meet with them.

Sherry Crutcher: Mr. Chairman.

Mark Wadsworth: Yes, Sherry.

Sherry Crutcher: Can you give me a clarification on FSA given BIA funding for noxious weeds? Did you guys --?

Sarah Vogel: No.

Sherry Crutcher: From the agency to BIA.

Connie Holman: What I was discussing and I hope that's what Ms. Vogel was alluding to is the mediation program. FSA utilizes the mediation programs. That's where our money goes to those mediation program to mediate issues between individual applicants or borrowers and farm service agency.

Sarah Vogel: And I think I did mention pesticides and support. The reason is that I believe many state Ag departments totally neglect reservations.

Sherry Crutcher: Yeah. The reason I was asking is because in my Natural Resource Department, I have to apply for funding for noxious weeds and pesticides from the BIA. But I have to

come up with a 50 percent match. And if I can't use my natural resources program to offset the 50 percent match, then there is no funding for noxious weeds on a reservation.

Sarah Vogel: What about your states? You have two states.

Sherry Crutcher: I have two states and we have the CWMA which works with us.

Sarah Vogel: Do they help you?

Sherry Crutcher: They give us the pesticides and then my crew goes out and does the -- so when you guys said it, I was like, what? Wait a minute.

Connie Holman: Mr. Chairman, I'll make sure that you get the information on the group that's meeting in D.C. That might be something you might be interested in attending.

Mark Wadsworth: What dates would those be?

Connie Holman: I'll look it up. It's sometime in January. I think it is. But it is in D.C. this year.

Sarah Vogel: And also the vice-chair, Tawney, with her incredible networks of credit folks, the CDFI network, the lenders, and so on. And I think the CDFI network has an individual at least in D.C. or am I wrong?

Tawney Brunsch: The Native CDFI network?

Sarah Vogel: Yes.

Tawney Brunsch: No. They don't have anyone in D.C. But we have contacts and they might be there already.

Sarah Vogel: I think that would be a really critical membership.

Connie Holman: It says the 2017 National Association of State Departments of Agriculture will be in D.C. from January the 29th through February the 1st. I'll forward you the email.

Mark Wadsworth: I think I might have a conflict because that's the society arrangement dates too. Anyway, let's see here. I think we've addressed this plain language guide.

Leslie Wheelock: Yeah.

Mark Wadsworth: Okay. So we can go on to the next, 40. Item 40. We merged? Okay. Yeah. I forgot. Mark, would you like to comment on this one?

Mark Rose: Yes. Mark Rose. We were made aware of this. I think Leonard made me aware of it back in September when this came about. So I think this sort of relates back to Sherry's concern. One of the things that we'll look at is the payment schedules, as I mentioned yesterday, to see what we can do there. There is a 50 percent advance payment. And I'm not sure where the cap is.

Sherry Crutcher: Thirty.

Mark Rose: No. Fifty.

Sherry Crutcher: We get 30. That's what we were told.

Mark Rose: No. Law says 50.

Sherry Crutcher: No. We get 30 and that's what we were told. And that's what you have request for is 30 percent.

Mark Rose: That may be in the DOA Farm Bill because it is 30 in the DOA. I'll back up. If you went in today and applied and got an EQIP contract, you can receive 50 percent.

Sherry Crutcher: I didn't know because we're requesting 30.

Mark Rose: And you can probably request 30 but we're going to give you 50 because that's what our system does. We're not set up to give anything less than 50 when you ask for it. The law says up to 50 percent but we give it at 50 percent. Now, the situation is the 2008 Farm Bill, the statement was you had to have the practice completed within 30 days which is still true for the '08 Farm Bill contracts. Under the '14 Farm Bill, there is stipulation that says once you receive that advance, you need to have the practice implemented within 90 days. So you have to start that practice. Not completed within 90 days, you start it. So I think there's communication there. I would appreciate if you would follow up.

Sherry Crutcher: I will.

Mark Ross: If there is 30 being stated on the '14 Farm Bill then I need to know that. And that goes true for anybody. When we do a payment schedule, like I described yesterday, it's an estimate of the cost of that practice to install. And we

update those every year as far as cost go. They're done on a regional multistate basis. I think we had eight or nine regions of payment schedules. Folks get together. Our program and economists get together within those region and develop those payment schedules. We do have concerns like we described yesterday. We've got to refine our process to figure out how we can try to get as close as we can to this estimated cost. Go ahead.

Sherry Crutcher: Mr. Chairman.

Mark Wadsworth: Yes, Sherry

Sherry Crutcher: With that, through the process that I've followed through the county committee, through the state committee, and I was never ever given back any paper trail that says it went to the regions. I was never -- who knows? I don't know if it ever went there or not because I was trying to raise the concern by following the chain of command. And like I said, oh, it will be brought up. But I never received anything that it was ever brought up to the suggestion that now, I'm telling - - I mean, like I said yesterday, that's an awesome program. But now, I'm telling everybody, be cautious, don't get stuck in there or you're going to end up paying back \$10,000. And on my reservation, there's not a whole lot of people that can come up with \$10,000. You know what I mean? And it will ruin them. It

will basically ruin them when they think they're getting into something good.

There again, now, with my position, I have a lot of trust from the farmers and ranchers on the reservation. I mean, if I say there's a program and you guys sign it, they're not going to ask any questions. They're just going to come in and sign. So that puts a lot on me to do a lot of the research because a lot of our people are elderly. And they're not going to know the computer or the downloads or the updates or any of that. And so I kind of take care of all my farmers and ranchers on the reservation. If there's a program to help them with their fencing or different things like that, that's where NRCS comes in. We have an MOU that basically states -- and I'm thinking about getting that changed because of the fact that we have it set up. Because we had so many EQIP project, we decided to leave it with the ALCO office, the Nevada office.

Now, that's kind of hurting us because with the grazing and the LFP and the new things that are coming up, we're asking for appraisals across the grazing land. And for them to come in and to do this, we wanted Idaho to give a second opinion on how much grazing we lost. While we have an MOU that says we -- because we had so many contracts through EQIP and everything, we decided to keep the NRCS portion with one office so we're not changing everything in and out. Well, now, the NRCS office in Idaho is

saying, no, you guys have an MOU. We don't have to touch you guys. We don't have nothing to do with you guys. And so now, I'm thinking about going in there and say, "Mr. Chairman, we need the changes so that our tribal membership have a choice if they want something from Idaho or Nevada."

Mark Rose: Who's the MOU with us?

Sherry Crutcher: With NRCS and FSA and with all the agencies.

Mark Rose: Okay. An overall memo.

Sherry Crutcher: Yeah. The farmer has a choice to go to Idaho or Nevada if they want to apply for loans. But the NRCS, we decided to leave that with Nevada. But now, Idaho is using that to say, we don't have to work for you guys. Yeah. And you know, I have a lot of issues.

Mark Rose: And the east state conservation, they're relatively independent I will say, but they still all follow the same policies and procedures. So it's something that Astor Boozer, who's the regional conservationists for the west. I'll visit with him. He was actually here. He was hoping to be able to stay here but he couldn't. His travel plans wouldn't allow him to. But I would recommend that this stay the way it is. The document is still in process. We'll follow up and continue work on this. The payment schedules we'll be looking at them for 2018. We'll be starting those discussions here after the

first of the year for 2018 payment schedules. And any concerns on the 50 percent versus 30 percent, that could be a Farm Bill difference in the contracts. But do follow up and let me know. And I'll certainly engage Barry Hamilton, who I think all of you know, who's our tribal outreach coordinator for national headquarters. I'll make sure he's aware of this as well. And do take anything to him if you want to take it to him. He's always in communications with us in the program side.

Mark Wadsworth: And Mark, I have a couple of questions at your bank. First of all, on the 50 percent, is there a possibility for waivers to be granted by the state?

Mark Rose: State conservationists has flexibility in extending as needed.

Mark Wadsworth: Okay. Both the implementation and the ending?

Mark Rose: Yeah, if you're implementing. We do have situations where weather or supplies may delay that implementation. We want to try to time that in advance as close to when you're ready to implement as possible. We don't want you coming in the office and get a contract awarded. And then, oh, I would apply for advance on that same day, but you're not ready.

Mark Wadsworth: Yeah. So that's understood.

Mark Rose: And ideally, the agency is trying to get - and I described this yesterday at the IAC meeting - we're trying to get planning first. We're trying to get the conservation plan up for us. So your design that you have, you're going to know that this is a \$30,000 design estimate. And it's going to cost you \$40,000 or \$50,000 or \$60,000 to get done. And that way you can make a decision ahead of time before you even apply.

Sherry Crutcher: That's exactly right.

Mark Rose: So we're trying to get to that. We saw a conservationist when all this came about, when we took over the dollars that we were trying to make in the contract specialist and financial managers. And they're not geared toward that. So they were planners first. Now, we're trying to get it reversed and get the people in place to be able to say, all right, let's get the plan done. Let's find out what you need. Let's get the cost estimates. Now, you're ready to start implementing.

Mark Wadsworth: And my second question. This, too, I think you know for the people that don't know and from my understanding too. Under the EQIP funding that is given to the state, a certain percentage is set aside that is accessible for tribal members to apply for.

Mark Rose: The state conservationist has that flexibility. We don't require that from headquarters.

Mark Wadsworth: Okay. And what is the percentage generally?

Mark Rose: It's going to vary. There's nothing set.

Mark Wadsworth: It's going to vary so there's nothing set.

Mark Rose: Right. So I know, like Washington State, I believe has a tribal pool. There are a number of other states that I don't know from the top of my head. But a state conservationist. I would encourage tribal leadership to be part of this [indiscernible].

Mark Wadsworth: Well, I'm carrying this on because one of my concerns is this, is that, okay, in the state of Idaho, we have a certain amount of money that is set aside into that pot of money that tribes and tribal members can access. And within the state of Idaho, it's becoming so competitive that that money is being immediately eaten up. And tribes have huge problems, million dollar contracts, half-a-million. It eats up that pool real quick. And my concern or what my intention here is that there is that language to help people within the federal agency on a federal level to get this money so that we can catch up basically because we were hindered from applying before is when that state runs out of money, are there other states that are using that pot of money? Instead shouldn't that money from that state - since it's through the Feds - be transferred to the areas where there's the most need?

Mark Rose: Yes. The way agency works every year and we're doing it on a more frequent basis this year, and there are states that don't obligate 100 percent within either some of their pools or other areas. Those initiative funds, and those are funds that are dedicated maybe to sage-grouse or monarch butterfly, those types of landscape initiatives, if they don't use all their funds by a certain time, it comes back to headquarters or a state may not use all their general funds. They basically have achieved what they needed to this year with their applications that they have on hand. Not to say that they don't have enough applications. Every state has excess of applications. But they've been able to do their highest priority to get their applications done, they will send dollars back to us.

What happens is we take a look at what the state's needs are. They have priorities as I said the state conservationists. It is will vary as to whether they have a tribal account. But those funds are available to the state conservationists. The chief will make a decision as to where those funds will be given out once we take a look and see what's available. I'll touch on some things when I speak later on. But you look concerned.

Mark Wadsworth: Well, to tell you the truth, you know, there's a lot of declining happening in the Indian country in

the state of Idaho because they exhaust those folks immediately now. And so it's like back to stage one.

Mark Rose: To back up this summer, beginning here in spring, [indiscernible], states will go through what's called an SRA, a State Resource Assessment. And what they'll do is they'll identify what their needs are based on the resource concerns and the priorities [sounds like] within that state. They put together their dollars for the program. They submit that to headquarters. And it's always more dollars requested than what we have available. Leadership will look at that or See's [phonetic] office, myself as far as programs go, the programs area. And then we'll work with what the state has submitted. We'll come up with an allocation based on what they submitted provided it's not padded. We have seen that a lot with the state. They want to get more money but the funds are then divided out. And again, we have more requests. It will be prorated down. Those funds are allocated.

And then as we go through the year, we look at what has been obligated, what's not been obligated, get the funds that aren't being used, and redistribute it to where they need to have the priorities because the state conservationist of Idaho, Curt Elke, will enhance and submit it. He's very aggressive on getting funds. So please know that, that I talked to Curt probably at least once a month if not more. I've known Curt for

a long time. But he's very aggressive on wanting to get funds to Idaho and getting those priorities done. Not to say that your other states aren't because Rey [sounds like] is too. I've got 51 state conservationists who want money and they will call. That was one of the things I had to step out of here before state conservationists for Maine was asking.

Mark Wadsworth: Gilbert.

Gilbert Louis: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Gilbert Louis here. Is there any way we can get around the SAMS registration? I know that's kind of the big bill especially coming from the tribe. I mean it's a lot. We really don't have access to internet and just even the language. And there's like -- it blows my mind.

Mark Rose: So I'm going to refer back to Erin again to what she said yesterday. That is a requirement by law, the Transparency Act, which USDA has no control over. We're doing the best we can to inform producers that this is where -- and actually it deals with entities which tribes fall under that, I believe. But I know there has been legislation introduced to both House and the Senate side to exempt agriculture. I don't know where that's at. I think it's just been introduced at this point. Again, it might be something. Again, I'm going back to Erin. I'll be talking about this Farm Bill discussions. And

you might want to have those conversations with her as to opportunities within specifically this.

SAMS is done and is designed for defense contractors. They get billions of dollars. Not a producer that gets \$30,000 or \$450,000 if their contractor is that high. So it's a concern. We had a big work issue when we caught up to getting everybody in compliance. OGC was very helpful to us as well as the departments. CFO was in and our own CFO to be able to help producers to get back in compliance with it after the board [sounds like]. And we will work with the producers if we happen to find the amount of compliance. Work with them in any way, shape, or form to make sure they're in compliance because it results in improper payments. I think the year that we discovered this, we went as an agency from a four or five percent improper payment to almost over 20 percent as a result of this. And now we're back down again.

Sherry Crutcher: That's a very good example because that's exactly what happened to me. It was an overpayment because it was for a 12 horsepower pump in my well. Well, the contractor came in and did the -- I asked for the percentage so I got the 30 percent which was like -- oh, I got -- I can't even remember the amount. But then \$3,272 was my overpayment. It was like a \$9,000 to \$10,000 contract. And I asked for the percentage to go ahead and get my well put in. So they gave me that payment.

And then the contractor came in and realized I didn't need a 12 horsepower. I just needed a 1 horsepower. So he put the 1 horsepower in. So the contract went on for a couple of years. And then all of a sudden, I get this letter that said, whoops, sorry we overpaid you. Almost three years went by. And I'm sorry, we overpaid you. You owe us \$3,272. So I went back to go through my process. It was like, hey, now, wait a minute now. I'm going through my process. Let me give you this plan. "No." I went to credit collections, \$3,272 to credit collections. They were calling me every single day. You know, you need to set up a payment plan. I said, well, I'm still trying to come up. And I even sent emails to the U.S. Treasury and this is what happened, this is what happened.

Two weeks ago, I finally got a letter because I said, you still owe me money. For whatever reason, my stuff went through the system and they paid me \$196 on another contract. So I stood there and I said you still owe my money. Where is my money? You were so quick to say I owe you money. But where is the money you still owe me? Two weeks ago, they finally said, "Oh, we found it. We had to do extensive research. We still owe you \$1,600. But you still owe us \$19."

Mark Rose: Yeah. Thank you for that input.

Sherry Crutcher: So when you talk about that process --

Mark Rose: That has happened -- you're not the only one. That's happened too. That's the challenges with advances sometimes is that advance could be greater. And again, I want to go back to that planning. We've got do a good job at conservation planning. So those were good examples of why we need to do that.

Sherry Crutcher: But we put our trust in the engineering.

Mark Rose: Yes.

Sherry Crutcher: And so when you do that --

Female Voice: So I'm acting on Mark's behalf. Sarah, did you have a question?

Sarah Vogel: I do. It has to do with the optional set aside that you mentioned, Mark.

Mark Rose: The 50 percent?

Sarah Vogel: No.

Mark Rose: The states, yeah.

Sarah Vogel: The state's optional set aside. I guess I have a series of questions about that. Number one, do you guys keep track of that so that, say, people in various states could make sure that there is adequate consideration of their tribal needs and so forth?

Mark Rose: Let me answer it this way, that by law, we're required to do five percent on historic and reserve and five percent of legal and socially disadvantaged. That's required.

We do track that. We are able to track fund pools that the state sets up. Like I said earlier, a state conservationist has the option to do a tribal fund pool or not. They most typically do and we can track those. I'm not aware of any goals that headquarters has imposed on the states to be able to do that other than the five percent and five percent for those two groups.

Sarah Vogel: And then I guess my second point is a comment. You mentioned the five percent and the five percent. Back in the day with what I observed with the Keepseagle issues and FSA, they also had a limited resource program. And many states construed the limited resource to be a cap, not a floor. When Native Americans came in, there was a very small percentage of let's say five percent and then farm ownership money was quite limited actually even then. It only took one or two loans to Native Americans statewide and that money was gone. And then they told Native Americans from that point on. So Native Americans were eligible for all money on an equal basis, and they had that set aside for supplemental purposes because of other issues. But when those FSA offices were saying Native Americans can get no more than five percent, it worked as discrimination. And that was one of our things. So with those two 5 percent, I think you should -- and this is just me giving

you an advice, that it is very possible that some of your staff may view that as a cap, not a floor.

Mark Rose: Thank you for those comments. Because we do encourage our state conservationists to make sure that they fund fully the best they can what their needs are above that five percent for each of those categories. I'm sure some will hit that five percent because there are other demands across the board. Now, I do want to stress also that that's not just the only fund pool that a Native American can apply for.

Sarah Vogel: That's my point exactly. But I'm concerned that some of the people at the state level or even the county level are going to view that five percent as the max. And this is for Native Americans and the 95 percent is for white folks. That sure happened with FSA. It may not have even have been realized by the nationals, but that is how people read it and because it fits in on the context that as Mark said, you belong over at the BIA. And one has to be, I think, it raises concerns on my part. So the floor, not a ceiling.

Mark Rose: The floor.

Sarah Vogel: Floor. By the way, it's such a pleasure to be able to speak to federal officials on stuff like this as opposed to suing them.

Connie Holman: It's a pleasure to be on our side too.

Leslie Wheelock: It's a pleasure not to be sued. Thank you, Sarah.

Mark Wadsworth: Just before I get to you, Josiah. We would like to thank NRCS because they were not on our council before. And now, for the first time recognized.

Josiah Griffin: Thank you, Mr. Chair. This is Josiah. I would like to recognize the addition of Angela Peter to the room at about 9:43.

Mark Wadsworth: We're almost through here.

Male Voice: We got the next one, too. Are you ready to move on, Mr. Chairman?

Mark Wadsworth: The one we went through. I just think there needs to be a little bit more outreach to let people more aware of this. The 50 percent cap especially, if it did change. Because I had heard before, 25 or 30 was it, and now it's up to 50. I would like to know when that change went through. And it sounds like --

Male Voice: The 2014 Farm Bill.

Female Voice: I mean I worked right with them. I didn't even know that.

Mark Rose: And like I said, if you have a current contract in DOA Farm Bill, that 30 percent is in place. But beyond that, the 50 percent. It really concerns me that they would be able to process less than 50 percent because I know when we talked

about this in updating our business tools with the contracting software, my comment was up to 30 percent. Well, we really don't want to build a flexi bill out, say, for our purposes of flexibility in there because you'd be across the board. Let's just make it at 50 percent. Then we got to get back to that good planning.

Sherry Crutcher: That's the key.

Mark Wadsworth: Some people do have to check out here. We are scheduled for a 15-minute break. So with that in mind, I think that we'd like to -- right now, it's ten minutes to ten. Can we be here five or ten after 15? Okay. So if you need to leave, go right ahead and take care of your business.

[Break - 1:34:37 to 1:35:19]

Mark Wadsworth: So I guess, Mark, you're still onboard here with the control of land.

Mark Rose: That should be one thing I don't have to update to. Because I'm actually sitting here yesterday, I got emails from Barry Hamilton that our OGC councilor has received an inquiry. I don't know where it's coming from at this point, but I assume a tribe regarding this controlled land issue and how we can be more flexible with that. Again, back in September versus a word of gossip well [sounds like] again. And I guess Jess Phillips [phonetic] received an inquiry. We're going to have a meeting that we're going to have --

Leslie Wheelock: It's next week.

Mark Rose: Next week?

Leslie Wheelock: It will be next week.

Mark Rose: Go ahead.

Leslie Wheelock: So at least one of the inquiries came through this council. It's a direct result of Josiah working with NRCS to put the answer together to put in the letter from the secretary. But the answer that we got back was not a good answer. I don't know if they didn't understand the question or they just wanted --

Mark Rose: OGC?

Leslie Wheelock: No. Well, no.

Mark Rose: From us?

Leslie Wheelock: OGC had looked at it but nobody was really paying close enough attention, because it didn't address the actual question which is talking about consistency. Some NRCS offices will recognize the permits that are given by the BIA as evidence of control of land. Apparently, some don't. And so it's a consistency request more than anything else.

Mark Rose: Well, the policy as well.

Leslie Wheelock: Yeah. And that's what I sent back to Jess. And I said I'll be in the office next week and can we please talk about it then.

Mark Rose: Yeah. We'll do that. I know Barry has, like I said, he sent an email yesterday. We're going to get together. I said, with you and Jess and others. It sounds like a policy issue. And we certainly can do policy very easy.

Leslie Wheelock: Yeah. I think that's all it is. I think it's kind of a reminder from the chief for -- you know, I don't know where it belongs or how it moves through the organization but it's just a consistency. Okay. It's on you. So we'll see you next week.

Mark Wadsworth: Gilbert.

Gilbert Louis: Thanks, Chairman. Gilbert Louis here. I know from the Pueblo of Acoma, one question was that the tribe couldn't be the umbrella for NRCS. And they got denied that access.

Mark Rose: Describe that further.

Gilbert Louis: So the tribe was trying to put an application for NRCS for the whole tribe as a whole. And that application got denied. They told them they couldn't do it.

Mark Rose: Really?

Gilbert Louis: Yes, because there was already members that were doing the projects.

Mark Rose: State?

Gilbert Louis: New Mexico.

Mark Rose: I'll call Javier is see what the situation was.

Gilbert Louis: Okay.

Mark Rose: Yeah. I'll look into that.

Gilbert Louis: Okay. Thank you.

Mark Rose: Mysterious result [sounds like], pending to the tribe. You do that with the contracts with the tribe. So there's probably more to it that wasn't explained to be. But I'll check it up. I'll call him up.

Mark Wadsworth: That's how we do all of our EQIP projects on our ranches that the tribe does a contract for. So if something's going on. I think the control issue is ongoing then. "USDA maintain a level of funding support for Native American farming and ranching through the Cy Pres funds from case are distributed and access to services to non-profit organizations." Could somebody explain that to me? I wasn't a part of that recommendation.

Female Voice: I wasn't part of the recommendation. But I remember the discussion. Basically, I think the concern was that if the Cy Pres funds were distributed from Keepseagle, which they still have not been because the case is still pending or the settlement rather. Anyway --

Leslie Wheelock: Don't go into it.

Female Voice: I won't. I won't use too many words here. I know Jerry is not here. He should appreciate that I'm censoring myself. I think there was a concern that if those

millions of dollars were then distributed that there would be some kind of cutback in programmatic budget authorities. There wouldn't be funding at the USDA level for Native farmers and ranchers because that had been made. So I think the resolution was just to make sure that funding levels were kept at least where they are now and not cut as a result of that case. And since the funds haven't been disbursed, I guess I would say we should keep it open.

Mark Wadsworth: Everybody agreeable? Okay. This was a request to I guess the secretary for OGC to have one full time representative or employee that was proficient in Indian Law and sit on that office. Yes, Leslie.

Leslie Wheelock: Mr. Chairman, this is Leslie Wheelock. I can give you an update that the Office of Tribal Relations is set up such that one person wouldn't be good enough. Each lawyer has oversight over one and possibly two different agencies. And so because we have 17 agencies, you'd end up with potentially one lawyer trying to learn all the intricacies of each agency rather than the lawyers who are working in those agencies learning about Indian country. They actually would prefer that they require the staff to learn more about Indian Law.

The EPA has actually reached out to us. USDA signed a tribal treaty right, an MOU that was signed on September 26th,

the first day of Tribal Nations Conference and introduced by the Secretary of the Interior. That MOU is something that we all hope will make federal government working with treaty rights more consistent because there is a possibility that DOJ will look at a treaty one way, Interior will look at it a different way, and USDA will look at it yet another way, EPA and so forth. There is cross education going on among the federal departments on American Indian Law and Treaty Rights. And it's kind of cool because all of the lawyers are now talking to each other where they didn't necessarily before.

It doesn't directly address this concern. It's from their perspective. They'd rather have better rounded attorneys than have one attorney who knows Indian Law and all the others who don't know it at all. I've been trying to figure out how to write that up. But that's the answer that we got back verbally.

Mark Wadsworth: Any other further comments? Sarah.

Sarah Vogel: I have a question for Leslie. If you don't have somebody with any type of deeper expertise at a USDA agency, to whom would the AGs office go?

Leslie Wheelock: It depends on the agency within which the action arises. So if I have a question and I don't know -- even if I did know the lawyers who are in charge of the agencies, I go to the general counsel. And I say to the general counsel, who do I need to talk to in order to sort this out or in order

to get an answer on this? There are instances where I'll go directly to the lawyers. But typically, I want him overseeing. I want to know that that position knows that there is a tribal question brewing within his organization.

Sarah Vogel: I was just thinking about, say, in the Denver Regional Office of OGC, some tribe comes in and says, what about our treaty? To whom within USDA Office of General Counsel does that Denver lawyer go if they have no one who is relatively familiar with Indian issues and sovereignty in the water rights cases and you name it?

Leslie Wheelock: I don't know the answer to that question directly. There are a lot of ways that they could go both to the other regional office attorneys who are in that space but also up to the Office of General Counsel. And they will also come into our office in order to get some of those questions answered.

Sarah Vogel: I guess --

Leslie Wheelock: I'm sorry, Sarah. Let me finish. They also, by the way, rely a lot on the Department of Justice because the Department of Justice is usually involved in something within each region that our activities or our decisions could affect negatively or positively. And we want to ensure that we understand why we should or should not be following what we would ordinarily do. So there's very little

action that USDA takes in terms of treaty rights that is not reviewed with DOJ.

Sarah Vogel: I agree with you. In an ideal world, there should be 17 different OGC lawyers who know about their particular program and also know about treaty law, et cetera, et cetera. I don't think that's going to happen. I really don't. So my preference is this could stay open. But I mean I don't --

Leslie Wheelock: I think that's fine. You'll get a new general counsel and you'll get to continue to pursue it.

Sarah Vogel: Yeah. And it isn't that Leslie and I disagree. But I just think it's a stronger position to have an in-house person to whom everybody can contact in-house. DOJ is I would suspect pretty tough to work with. And an OGC lawyer doesn't have an okay to just call the DOJ to get legal advice. So it's a little thorny and it's a separate kind of practice than the typical USDA lawyer would encounter. So I'd like to see this keep staying.

Leslie Wheelock: This is Leslie again. We have had the general counsel ask if I could be downstairs in five minutes in a handful of instances because they're trying to resolve something. They look to our office to help them make the final determination or to give them information that they may not have.

Sarah Vogel: They may not be so fortunate in this next administration to have highly trained lawyers with vast experience like available to USDA, like you and Janie have been and Tawney and who else? Dustin Miller.

Leslie Wheelock: Dustin, yeah.

Sarah Miller: These are all lawyers who knew a ton, and it may not be like that.

Leslie Wheelock: If you all know of lawyers like that, by the way, who wouldn't mind working for this administration, we do need somebody in this office. And the sooner the better. This is Leslie.

Mark Wadsworth: All right. We're on the last one here. I guess, Mark, have you guys looked at this through field staff training, webinars, and stuff?

Mark Rose: Well, yeah, I'd love to do that, really ten years ago. But let me describe, as I mentioned yesterday, I see you talking about National Conservation Stewardship Program. We reworked how we implement it this year, the fiscal year '17 as a two-year process. In October, we brought in 350 people to Saint Louis to provide them with - we have to call it information about training. That training, it feels like a whole new requirements.

Josiah Griffin: Excuse me, sir. I apologize. This is Josiah. If you wouldn't mind just speaking into the mic.

Mark Rose: Yeah. Sorry.

Josiah Griffin: We don't have our sound technician here to verify what the mic isn't picking up.

Mark Rose: Sure. Thank you, Josiah.

Josiah Griffin: Thank you.

Mark Rose: So as I was stating, back in October, we held a National Conservation Stewardship Operations Information meeting to tell our field staff or show our field staff what the generals [sounds like] were. It went very well. They take that back to their states. It's consistent.

On a monthly basis, we have under programs and also under the easement side as well as the FA side, we host a monthly teleconference with our states to make sure that information is being passed along, anything new that comes up. So this goes on monthly. We actually had one -- it's the second Tuesday of every month. I can't remember what Tuesday this is but I think it was this past Tuesday we had one or next Tuesday. But that is information -- I think the last thing were from 30 minutes to 2 hours sometimes.

Personally, myself, I will start hosting a weekly call with our states for answer questioning, answers to clarify anything. And easement side does the same thing as well. On the science and technology side, they host monthly phone calls, webinars with their folks. So this way, the same information is being

heard and this is what NRCS is doing across the board to make sure that our states are consistent.

Now, the next step we'd like to take within programs, with RCPP since it's new, we are planning to host four regional sessions with state conservationists in the RCPP state point of contact this summer or late summer so that will be planned for internal folks. And then, the same thing on the program side, the FA programs, what we did with CSP in October, we'd like to do that again this year with our assistant state conservationists per programs that implement EQIP, CSP across the board.

So those are in the planning stages, barring any budget issues. That's the big caveat we have here is the budget concerns and travel caps that we're under to be able to accomplish those. We'd like to get back to that. We hear from our field that personal face-to-face meetings are good. They're very costly though. But that's the only time that our folks can interact. Webinars and VTCs, video teleconferences are good, but we just don't have that interaction. Face-to-face, personal, they learn a lot more. We have a lot of constant turnover with our assistants. I don't want to say constant turnover, but we get new assistants on a regular basis and we want to be able to set up a new, again, operations information thing for them to understand the programs and their job as they

come in new with that information. So these are some of the things that are in the works, hopefully, beginning in 2017, that's our goal on NRCS.

Mark Wadsworth: Yes, Leslie?

Leslie Wheelock: Mr. Chair, I would just, for Mark's benefit. CRPP, I know it went out fast.

Mark Rose: RCPP.

Leslie Wheelock: RCPP, sorry, went out fast. Excuse me. Our office was out doing conferences with decks, slide decks [sounds like], and I think we had three state cons who came up to us and said do you know where I can find more material on this because they didn't feel comfortable talking to people about it. We already were. But I was also in the regulatory review meetings, so I had to know more about it or had to know as much about it as possible. Just to let you know that things like that, moving that fast, are really tough to get to that level, quickly.

Mark Rose: It is. It is. That's why we want to do these four. Even though it's three years after the program has been implemented, we still have challenges and changes right now with RCPP, so thank you, Leslie.

Leslie Wheelock: You're welcome.

## 2017 Agriculture Census Update

Mark Wadsworth: Looks like that's still ongoing. We now go on with the current agenda. Wil Hundl, now, I'll let you say your name. He's the state statistician for NASS, talking about the 2017 ag census.

Wilbert Hundl: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And thank you council for giving us the opportunity to come this morning and give you an update on the upcoming 2017 census of agriculture. I'd like to just give you a quick update about the meetings we've had, the ongoing training that we're doing as well as the outreach. And then, if you've got questions for me, I'll certainly try to entertain those and provide you with the best answer I can come up with from the information that I have.

It is getting to be the census time. We will be mailing out the 2017 census about this time next year, usually around the middle part of December. We hope to get the data collection by the first week of February. Of course, we typically do two or three mailings, depending on the response. If the mailing doesn't work for us, then we go back and do telephone non-response, and in some cases, we even do personal interview.

We had our community-based organization meeting in September. We brought in our community organizations that we worked with in past years. We're developing our publicity plan right now, trying to put together our publications material to

help do outreach. We expect to have that done hopefully by the first part of June. We've been working with our state statisticians across the country as well as our regional directors, trying to get them to reach out to the tribal nations and all community-based organizations to help promote the census, to help educate the purpose of reporting to the census, and not only that, but to take 2012 data from the census and help explain what that data is used for, how the tribes and the community-based organizations can use that.

So it's a big effort right now. In addition to that, we're working on what we call list building. We have a number of these name-and-address cards that we've been sharing with all groups that we work with, both at the national level and all the state levels - any type of outreach we go to. I'm more familiar with the Southern Plains area both in Oklahoma and Texas. We partner with a number of the USDA agencies at the county level. When they have meetings to help talk about programs and things with NRCS rep, we typically try to have a NASS representative there to explain the census and help get people signed up. We have these cards, there's also an online tool now that we have available.

It was brought to our attention that when we're at these meetings, perhaps since we do have an online tool, perhaps the NASS official should have his laptop there and have the ability

to help people sign up at that point. So we're always looking at new and better ways to help, first of all, get people signed up. Second of all, explain the importance of what the census is and how it can help themselves and their communities as well as their industry. That's what we're doing now until about the end of July. At that point then, we'll freeze our list and prepare it for the census mail out, which again will be around the middle part of December.

We just issued a press release this morning. We're going to be contacting people that have sent these forms in to do what we call a screener. We go out and actually look at individuals and the type of agriculture they have so we know how to code them into the census to give them a form. We're doing multiple version forms. I don't know if any of you have seen those. But the long form can be quite daunting. It covers every aspect of agriculture, so we're trying to be representative of everything. Sometimes, that's not always necessary.

I was talking with several folks from the Intertribal Agriculture Council this past week who are from Alaska and some from the Southeast as well. In Alaska, it's quite easy to be a thousand dollar of sales. When you're talking about the price of vegetables in Alaska compared to the lower 48, in a quarter acre area of a garden, it doesn't take very much produce to

equate to a thousand dollar of sales. And that is what the farm definition is.

So with that, I'll entertain any questions.

Mark Wadsworth: Angela?

Wilbert Hundl: Good morning.

Angela Peter: Hi. I am Angela Peter from Alaska. I want to know, we actually have talked about this a long time ago when I first started, about subsistence in terms of subsistence in the NASS.

Wilbert Hundl: I am aware that that topic has come up. For the 2017 census, we're still working on trying to figure out how we would we go about collecting data on subsistence farming, not that NASS is not open to change. We've just taken on the local foods initiative, urbanizational garden growing. So it's something that we really need to entertain if it's a large part of the agricultural production cycle. That's where we need the dialogue to keep figuring out how it is that we take that information and equate it into production agriculture terminology.

Angela Peter: Yeah. There are a lot of the Tribal Conservation Districts in Alaska as well as other entities that are getting into hydroponics. And we're continuing to push with the RCPP grant for more gardens, so we are working up there. Maybe, I could take your card, that will be great.

Wilbert Hundl: Absolutely. These cards, I'll leave my business cards here. I can work through Josiah. We're glad to email the council for more information. If you don't know who your state stat or your regional director is in your state, please let us know. Let Josiah know because that's really how we keep this dialogue working. Sue Benz is in Alaska. Sue Benz is our state statistician in Alaska. And she does travel the state of Alaska quite frequently, so she's very familiar with the agriculture there.

Angela Peter: Oh, where is she from? I mean, where is she stationed?

Wilbert Hundl: Gosh, I don't even know that. I think it's in Anchorage.

Female Voice: She lives there?

Wilbert Hundl: Yes. She is in Alaska and her regional office is in the state of Washington.

Mark Wadsworth: Wil, where do you work out of?

Wilbert Hundl: I'm the regional director for the Southern Plains. I work out of Austin, Texas. I was the state statistician in Oklahoma for ten years, so I'm very familiar with Indian Country. I've worked with the tribal nations there in Oklahoma. I explained to my colleagues, you have to keep visiting your partners. You know, to go at one time and say let's do the census, let's collect the data, and we're done. It

doesn't work that way. It does not work that way. It takes a strong effort. That's why I appreciate your question and your dialogue. We have to keep working together.

Angela Peter: This is Angela again. There are 229 federally recognized tribes. One of the things that we're working on with AVI is to actually get in touch with every one of those and have an open dialogue with every one of those. So we could definitely help in that instance.

Wilbert Hundl: I will get you Sue Benz' contact information. I'm sure she'll jump at the opportunity to be a part of your meetings.

Angela Peter: Is that a Palmer [phonetic]?

Wilbert Hundl: Palmer. Yeah, there you go.

Mark Wadsworth: Tawney was next and then, we'll go to you, sir.

Tawney Brunsch: No, sorry.

Mark Wadsworth: Okay.

Sarah Vogel: I have a question for both Angela and for you. Yesterday, Angela, she's always bringing us new things, new information, stuff I never knew about in all the years I've worked in agriculture and so on. One of the terms she brought up yesterday and it sounded like a rather big deal, was creating moose browse, b-r-o-u-s-e [sic], where lots and lots of people I take it, maybe on machines, go out and they plant lots and lots

of little trees for the moose to browse on because they wanted to keep the population of moose.

Wilbert Hundl: I talked to William or Bill from Alaska last week. He was from Alaska. He was visiting.

Sarah Vogel: And Angela has been talking about this issue of subsistence agriculture and a little bit of living off the land. It isn't like it's a passive process as I understand from Angela. It takes a lot of work. They have to get the environment. They have to create the habitat and this moose browse, I think. I think, my question, kind of on behalf of Angela, is would you categorize the creation of moose browse as a type of agriculture practice that you would try to capture in the national statistics database?

Wilbert Hundl: That's a question I can't answer this morning. If I may, Mr. Chairman, there was a similar case when we conducted or were preparing to conduct the 2009 census of aquaculture where the aquaculture industry wanted to count or include soft-shelled crabs in the count of aquaculture. If you know a little bit of soft-shelled crabs, you know, you capture the crab, put it in a tank and allow it to molt, and then you have soft-shelled crabs for market. That was unique to NASS.

Everything that we had in production agriculture, there's some practice to it. You have raw materials and you plant seeds or you do something and cultivate it, and then you sell it.

Capturing something from the wild, waiting until it molts its shell, and then you sell it - we didn't know how to do it. We figured it out. That's something. We have to keep that dialogue open.

Mark Wadsworth: Yeah. Our major concern at the very beginning of this, during the first council meetings when we brought up this subsistence portion was that some of our people rely upon a moose per year or two moose per year, or they do not have that food source available. Now, if you could equate that thousand-pound moose or that 750 or 400 pressed meat in that area, I believe it would be pretty much over that thousand dollar qualification to be counted within the census, not even salmon, the other subsistent food that is out there. That's why we brought this concern to you people at the very beginning that we should, because if you could do that, you could pretty much count every one of the Alaskan or Native village people up there as being in production agriculture.

Mark Wadsworth: I agree with what you're saying.

Mark Wadsworth: Yes, sir.

Erin Parker: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, Wil. I appreciate you being here. This is Erin, sorry, for the record. I had mentioned yesterday and Angela, you had to take a board meeting call so you were out of the room, but one of the cool things in the Intertribal Agriculture Council materials - and I

don't know how much Mr. Ducheneaux back here is going to go into it. But the Pacific Region of IAC, their TA person, has been working with their local NASS or their regional NASS folks in California to try get subsistence into the census. They can't change what's here for this year, but they're trying to work with what they have. So I'd love to talk to you afterwards maybe. I talked to Leslie yesterday about getting you and Leslie looped in to what the TA network is already doing in that region. So maybe, they can communicate with Sue Benz in the Alaska office and try to figure out how to crack this nut of getting subsistence in because obviously, that's a really big, important thing to do.

So that was one comment and I have a couple of questions for you, Wil. First of all, historically, Indian country is under counted in the census and I know through Michelle Radice and the other folks in the NASS seem like you all have been making some great efforts in terms of getting more and more folks reporting in. So my first question, I was just wondering how you're continuing to rectify that and work with folks in Indian country to make sure that Native producers are counted in the census.

And my second question has to do with the enumerators. That is a process that I will display my ignorance in trying to formulate a question, but I'm going to try to anyway. One of

the things that I've been talking to the TA staff about, and that's Keir Johnson in the Pacific Region by the way for the record, is how to get more tribal enumerators. And try to figure that out to see if especially for that subsistence question, how that can help people understand what's being counted. So those are my two. Thank you.

Wilbert Hundl: Okay. I'll start with the second one and then go to the first one. This whole process is like baking a cake. There are multiple ingredients. I wish I could just say we'll do A and everything will be great. But it is not, it takes so many different parts to that.

One issue is training internally our staff. How do you go out and visit with tribal nations or any community-based organization and build that level of trust when there's been so much animosity toward the government or so much bad service from the government? How do we build that trust? Again, it's not going to be done on one trip or one meeting. It's going to be going out there repeatedly and visiting with them, explaining, showing how we can help.

As I tell a lot of folks that I visit with, the census is not going to help you today. I need it today, but it's not going to help you today. It may not help you tomorrow, but over time, working together, we will get it to help everyone. So that's one of the pieces is we got to train our people

internally to go out and visit and do outreach. Then we have to be there when they do need our help to show them how to use the data and how to help get their needs satisfied.

The other part of it is our enumeration. Some areas, you can get enumerators to work in those areas. It's very open. It's very acceptable. In other areas, when you bring someone within that area that knows people, no one wants to give him the information because they don't want anybody knowing anything about. So that's another case that you have to really just kind of keep working with. But we do have opportunities to hire and that's one of the purposes that we partner with community-based organizations, trying to get help and recognition in those areas.

The main thing though, and this is a point I want to stress, this census is people's lives. It's people's information. So we are bound by federal law, we have to protect that information. And you not knowing me and I not knowing you, how willing are you to give me information about you and your operation? So again, it's a recipe. It takes a lot of effort. It takes a lot of effort to, first of all, get to know people, build that trust, and then help understand what the information is used for. So I don't have a silver bullet, but just a lot of extra effort. Did I address your questions?

Mark Wadsworth: Josiah?

Josiah Griffin: Mr. Chairman, thank you. This is Josiah. I just wanted to point out that the time is now 10:48. I defer to the council, of course, but Mr. Zach Ducheneaux is waiting to present. I would be happy to take any further questions that council members might have to Wil, and also, to our colleagues at NASS headquarters and make sure that there is a response.

Mark Wadsworth: Leslie, you have one more comment.

Leslie Wheelock: I just wanted to tie things together. Leslie Wheelock, Office of Tribal Relations in the secretary's office. In working with Angela, one of the things that Josiah and I have been talking about is in many situations where NRCS programs are used, the result is something that is helping animal habitat. What we were trying to do was to draw, similar to what you've done with the blue crabs as you described them, was to draw a linkage to the fact that that's a maintenance process, an encouragement process, some sort of a process that enables or assists the wildlife, similar to the moose browse. And that might be one of the kind of little hurdles that we've discovered where people are maintaining an environment in order to have those animal and plant species available in that environment.

Mark Wadsworth: Thank you, Wil.

Wilbert Hundl: Thank you.

Mark Wadsworth: I want to see those moose eye browse [sic]. We'll carry on, the next speaker, I see Zach Ducheneaux.

### **Intertribal Agriculture Council Update**

Zachary Ducheneaux: Good morning, everybody. It's nice to see some fresh faces, good to see some old friends. I'm Zach Ducheneaux with the Intertribal Ag Council and I've been offered a chance to share some of the things that we're doing at the IAC with you. I have a habit of not being able to keep my mouth shut, but it seems like with subsistence issues with NASS, you normally would have sold that but you had to eat it. So I would go ahead and count them. I'd give them a card, I'd sign them up, and I would count those folks right now, the way it is, under that caveat because that's the criteria. You have to do a thousand dollars' worth of produce or meat that would have normally been sold. Normally, I would have sold it, but I had to eat it this time, so I would count them. We got to do something to get the count up.

As you're aware or maybe not, where we just concluded our 30th annual membership meeting. We had 73 youth representing 30 different tribal nations here, doing their own event alongside of ours. And it was really a heartwarming experience. It's been a great week and I'm very happy to be here to visit with you folks to conclude a great week. I did submit some

information for your consideration and your reading enjoyment. If there are any questions on that, I'd be happy to field those straightaway, otherwise, I'll just give you a little bit of a narrative on what's going on with Intertribal Ag Council.

Erin Parker: I have a question but it could wait.

Mark Wadsworth: Yes, Erin.

Erin Parker: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The first thing that jumped out of me is the very first thing in your report, Zach, about the lack of funding. Can you give us kind of an update on where you are with that right now and what you need?

Zachary Ducheneaux: Yes, ma'am. You're speaking of the Tribal Technical Assistance Network.

Erin Parker: Yes, sir, thank you.

Zachary Ducheneaux: Okay. The Tribal Technical Assistance Network was created in 2010 as a result of the Keepseagle Settlement. And our idea at the outset of this venture was that we were the relief offered in the settlement in the form of the 10 to 15 regional network technical assistance centers. I'm quoting that incorrectly, my friend Sarah could correct me.

Early on, we were funded to do seven to eight technical assistance centers. We were funded at a level of \$1.8 million. Funded in a five-year agreement that was funded annually, so that there were no violations of the Antideficiency Act. Within the first year-and-a-half, we fell victim to the sequester and

were cut back to \$1.4 million. We've been able to work since then with Leslie at the Office of Tribal Relations to get that increased back to \$1.6 million. But even with the signing of our new agreement on December 6th for the following year, we're at \$1.6 million, doing the job twice as good as we were to start with because we pay our people like crap and their hearts' in it.

The current situation is we've made a request to the Secretary of the Department of Agriculture, through the Office of Tribal Relations for another multi-year agreement to continue doing the work that we're doing. We had feedback from OGC that such an agreement would violate the Antideficiency Act and we struggled to see how that could violate the Antideficiency Act now when it didn't in 2010, but we're hoping to be able to make that case to Deputy Secretary Scuse and the folks at OGC before the change in administration, so we could hopefully get some continuity that we could offer our staff to keep them around because we've got a pretty good staff put together. Did that get around your question? Any other questions with regard to the reports?

Every time I get up here and get a chance to visit with you, my friend Angela reminds me that we don't have representation in Alaska. The last time we talked, I made sure that I touched based with Angela, following up as we got closer

to our agreement and we did have some folks from Alaska attend our meeting. They're very interested in engaging like we talked about, to provide that service in the Alaska Region. Because we understand that it's bigger than most of the rest of the Indian country altogether and we want to get some people on the ground there.

Mark Wadsworth: Yes, Angela.

Angela Peter: Angela Peter from Alaska. I appreciate the fact that you guys are working with us. However, I just don't understand how we can continue to appoint people that are not from Alaska. There was a gentleman in the room that stood up behind me and said that he worked for Alaska. Neither the state nor the tribal liaison for Alaska, or any of us knew him. And we just cannot have, I mean, if they understood it or even worked, lived in Alaska for a while, maybe we can accept that. But, just unacceptable, we can't, at the rate we're going, we need to have somebody that already is aware of our issues in Alaska.

Zachary Ducheneaux: Exactly. And that's one of the reasons that we engaged in discussions with you about capitalizing on your network and maybe contracting with the local organization that's got an established network to provide those services so that familiarity is there. I know Tom Harris talked to Mark Rose about it the other day, talked about that

eye-to-eye contact and everybody got a kick out of it. Tom said this eye-to-eye contact that we're having here, what people don't understand, 34 of my tribes, you don't do that at all, unless you're getting ready for romance or wrestling, he says. It's important to have that. Mark quickly looked away. But it's important to have that cultural awareness and we realize that and we respect that and we're looking forward to getting something going with you guys up there that works better for you.

Angela Peter: So who is the guy?

Zachary Ducheneaux: We don't have anybody in Alaska right now.

Angela Peter: Really?

Zachary Ducheneaux: So if they're saying they're working for us, they are lying.

Angela Peter: Okay, exactly. Well, I'll find out who he is.

Zachary Ducheneaux: So other things that we're working on, the IAC is in the process of creating a Community Development Financial Institution. A lot of the work that the IAC has done in its 30-year history and especially since the inception of the TA network has centered around ensuring access to capital so that we can further develop our agricultural endeavors. We've identified a gap that still exists between FSA who is the lender

of first opportunity, or the lender of last resort, depending on how you want to look at it, and the people on the ground that have access to the resource and could do more if they had the capital to develop it. So what we hope to do with the CDFI is to bridge that gap and do some other things. So the first thing that we're going to do is serve those that can't get a loan right now.

The next thing we're going to do is help producers break the commodity cycle, whatever their commodity cycle is. In the Great Plains, we are bound to an annual production commodity cycle. All of our operating credit is based on that. So there is no opportunity for anybody in commercial agriculture in the country to really get into value-added agriculture if they are stuck in that commodity cycle. We hope to provide a bridge loan from the time that fellow needs to pay all of his bills at the end of production or that lady, that producer we'll say, to help them get that product to the next level while it's still under their ownership so that we can add the value to the product on our reservation. The profit from that can come to our reservation because we firmly believe whatever solution is going to help cure the ills of Indian country, it's got to have a food system component and we've got to start producing food and stop producing food products. So that's one of the things that we're working on. That's the second of our loan products.

Another loan product we're going to have at the CDFI, we're going to make loans to other CDFIs in the hopes of encouraging them to parlay their resources out into agriculture. We did a market study and a lot of the existing CDFIs would get into agriculture if they had the technical expertise. We hope to partner with them with the capital and technical expertise to get them to deploy all of their loan fund towards agriculture as appropriate. So those are the three loan products that we're going to have at the inception.

One of the unique things that we're going to do and that we haven't seen done anywhere else, we're going to have a loan called the "prove to us that we're wrong loan. Thank you so much." We understand that people that are unbanked or underbanked and do not have a well-rounded financial background are going to be higher risk borrowers by definition. But we don't think that that necessarily means that they're not going to pay. So what we're going to do is underwrite them differently. If someone comes in and their history shows that they may be a slightly more significant credit risk, we're going to go ahead and make them that loan. We're going to charge them the interest that the prevailing industry would suggest. Or we're going to take half of the interest that they pay us, set it aside, keep it in our loan-loss reserve and when they pay us in full on their last payment, we're going to cut that check

back to them. We're going to rebate it back after they prove us that everybody in the world is wrong. They are not a bad credit risk. We think that's really going to be innovative, and I think we're going to lead some people into that type of mindset. We have to treat you this way to be a prudent lender, but we can also be a good lender at the end of this when you prove us wrong. We're really excited about that.

The CDFI, we're working with the Precovery Labs and Seven Sisters Consulting to help put together the framework of charter and bylaws and loan products and what have you. We hope to have the charter filed in the first of January. We're going to send out a solicitation to invite potential board members to apply. We're really looking forward to this and we think shortly after we do file our charter, we're going to be able to engage in an agreement. We haven't determined the nature of the agreement yet but with Farm Credit Services of America to get some debt capital. Whether it is going to be an equity investment or they're going to loan us the money with a thoughtful [sounds like] rate, we're looking forward to it either way because we want to get the loans going out the door by the end of next year so that we can have another checkbox towards our treasury certification checked off the list.

If there's any questions about the CDFI or any of that I'd sure be willing to hear. How long have I got to talk to you? I guess I've to decide whether I got to hurry or not.

Female Voice: [Indiscernible]

Zachary Ducheneaux: That works for me. There's a lot of stuff I'd like to shop for in town this week. So with regard to the CDFI and the ongoing work of the Intertribal Agriculture Council, we want to be able to put together a holistic package for folks to get their product to market. We have the American Indian Foods Program that I have visited with you all about. I'll just touch on it briefly for those that aren't aware maybe.

We've got a grant through the Foreign Agriculture Service for the Market Access Program where we can take a tribal producer or a tribe or a tribal organization that has a shelf-ready product and engage them in an export readiness seminar, and then take them overseas to where they can sell their quantity of product, that we match them with vendors that could use their quantity.

Where this is unique, and we're really proud of what we're doing here, this is kind of an upside down way of getting into the export market. Normally, what happens is you produce all you can locally. You've got to find something else to do, so you work to get into the export market. Well, Indian country doesn't have the capital to build all of that capacity, to fill

all of the local need. So one thing that is unique about our export readiness program is it helps producers get to where they can get into a niche market, bring additional value for their product home, and then develop capacity to do more locally.

Tanka Bar is a great example of that. Both Mark Tilsen and Karlene Hunter have participated in our export readiness seminars and our overseas food shows. They said without that start they wouldn't be able to be in all of these stores locally. Red Lake Nation Wild Rice is another customer of our American Indian Foods program. When they first started with the program, they were selling their wild rice for pennies a pound. Now when you go to buy a Red Lake Nation Wild Rice, they're getting what it's worth. You're paying dollars per ounce. So think of the impact that that's going to have on all of our reservations when we start to develop that food product to where we are selling it as food instead of sending it on the highway to have someone else turn it into poison, and then bring it back to sell it to us.

I really try to rile up the youth that we have in these meetings. I tell them, there's a big protest going on for a pipeline up there in North Dakota. I know you guys are all in favor of what the water protectors are doing, but there is another pipeline that is killing us quicker than that one is and it's the highway. It's taking our raw products off the

reservation, turning them into poison and bringing them back to us. We have to start protesting that, and we have to stop standing for that. So that's one of the things that we hope to do with the CDFI and the American Indian Foods program.

We realized there is a need to market these products domestically too. To rebuild our trade routes, our local trade routes, domestic trade routes. We've got a Mobile Farmers Market that travels around the Great Lakes region, taking wild rice from one reservation over there to another reservation where it's sold and they buy apples over there. So we're starting to develop that on a regional basis.

We want to take that model a little bigger, so we did get funded through the small and socially disadvantaged farmers' grant program to do some local, some continental food shows where we are taking these products that are in the American Indian Foods program and getting them into some local venues as well instead of only going overseas. Because there are some burdens that are associated with exporting that product clear across the world. We hope to develop markets locally and globally for our producers.

We've entered into a couple of agreements with the Natural Resources Conservation Service. We did apply and get funded for a Regional Conservation Partnership Program grant. What that is going to do is help five tribes at the outset - Lower Brule,

Santa Clara Pueblo, I believe it's the Citizen Potawatomi Band, the new acquisition of land in the Black Hills, [indiscernible], and the Alaskan tribe of -- of course that's one that eludes me right now. But what the focus of the program is, is to help establish a baseline of conservation activity that can be quantified so that when the carbon sequestration markets finally do come online, they'll have their baseline established. They can do these additional features, additional practices with EQIP dollars that will help them develop a marketable carbon sequestration credit. We partnered with Indian Land Tenure Foundation on that particular grant, and the state conservationist of South Dakota is the sponsoring state con.

I'm running out of things to talk about. If there are any questions I sure feel --

Mark Wadsworth: Angela Peter?

Angela Peter: Sorry, Zach. I always seem like I'm verging you with --

Zachary Ducheneaux: No. I consider you a friend, and I consider this discourse, so I'm all right.

Angela Peter: I tend to get my feathers ruffled sometimes but it's good to talk to somebody face-to-face and get the things out.

Zachary Ducheneaux: Absolutely.

Angela Peter: I'm hoping you were approached by Tom Harris about attending the AVI Rural Small Business in February.

Zachary Ducheneaux: Yes. My boss committed both him and myself to go.

Angela Peter: I know. I noticed, I heard that, but I just wanted it out if you did.

Zachary Ducheneaux: Absolutely.

Angela Peter: Yeah.

Female Voice: [Inaudible]

Angela Peter: Yeah. Oh yeah, February, this might be really cold.

Zachary Ducheneaux: As long as the planes are flying, we'll be there.

Angela Peter: Okay. I'm totally spaced out here. Hold on. I have to get back.

Zachary Ducheneaux: That's okay. I can stick around for a little bit too and visit.

Mark Wadsworth: Tawney Brunsch.

Tawney Brunsch: Yup. Tawney. Zach, I just want to say kudos, excellent job. My god, you guys are doing a ton. I hear your staff is excellent based on comments and some of them that I met the other day. So keep up the good work. I'm also thrilled to hear that you're moving forward with your plans for CDFI. I was honored to be asked, help provide some information

to Seven Sisters on the survey. I do want to bring up again the gap that even though Lakota Funds is a Native CDFI that has an agreement with the FSA to provide FSA guaranteed loans, there is still a gap that remains.

I think that's where your CDFI could come in really handy, plus the consideration of innovative products, potentially providing CDFIs like Lakota Funds with cash loan-loss reserves for example, because we are serving a risky market. I mean that's something Lakota Funds has been doing for 31 years, but given the fact that there are additional variables in serving the ag community, you know, calves die. So the market collapses - whatever. There's a big need for the cash loan-loss reserve and the additional products that FSA doesn't guarantee or the types of loan products, what are considered as contract services like custom baling for example, which some of our smaller producers that's the way they're kind of getting back in if they are generating any income at all. Lakota Funds wants to be able to help them with or without that FSA guarantee, but that's where you could come in handy.

Zachary Ducheneaux: Absolutely.

Tawney Brunsch: So however else we can help honestly I would love to see this get off the ground and keep up the good work.

Zachary Ducheneaux: Thank you. The CDFI community has been very welcoming. We don't pretend to think that we know it all, so we're definitely going to come down and visit with you as soon as we're up and rolling to get our FSA guarantee ability rolling.

Tawney Brunsch: Great.

Zachary Ducheneaux: And you mentioned something about livestock producers which flipped a switch in my brain about one of the other things that we're looking to develop. It's some language to try to get put into the Farm Bill that brings parity for livestock producers, subsistence producers, and the commodity grain producers. Where we are unique -- you have a question? I can --

Female Voice: Go ahead.

Zachary Ducheneaux: Where we are unique as livestock producers and subsistence producers is when the value of our products that we are marketing goes down, the value of our assets supporting our capital goes down as well. All across this country right now there are cattle producers whose asset base has been reduced by one-third to two-thirds because of things that are happening on the Chicago Board of Trade, and we feel it's artificial and it's contrived. As long as we're going to let them mess with our risk management tool, we should have some price support, and some asset equity support built into the

Farm Bill, better insurance programs with premiums deferred like the grain farmers do. So we've got a list of things. We'd be glad to share that with all of you and get your input on it, so you can advocate from the other side if you think of something that's worth it.

Tawney Brunsch: We appreciate that.

Mark Wadsworth: I think Angela remembered.

Angela Peter: No. I didn't remember but I got a different one. You mentioned an analysis in Alaska that you were conducting through a --

Zachary Ducheneaux: So we're going to work through an RCPP agreement with the South Dakota State NRCS to help a tribe in Alaska at the outset and I don't remember which --

Angela Peter: Akiachak.

Zachary Ducheneaux: Okay. Cool. To help them quantify their carbon sequestration so that they could then engage in some practices if they want to through EQIP or conservation stewardship to enhance that so then you will have a quantifiable carbon sequestration credit that you could market in the California market or the national market.

Angela Peter: Okay, yeah. I think a lot of us are working with them on that.

Zachary Ducheneaux: Good, very good. I look forward to it.

Mark Wadsworth: The carbon credit thing - it's not on the big board yet?

Zachary Ducheneaux: No. It's not on the big board yet. They've been trading them in California for quite some time. It was right at the edge of the big board, and then we had the change in Congress. But it's going to eventually have to come, I think, otherwise we can trade them overseas. We just have to develop that.

Mark Wadsworth: Yeah. Speaking for the Shoshone-Bannock tribes, we were approached to go through the process of getting our carbon credits quantified. It was one of those things that was just totally up in the air. We're just spinning our wheels for something that may not be fruitful. I'm talking about four or five years ago when this first started, talked about.

I guess what I'm saying here is I'm probably like other tribes across the United States with huge rangelands and could utilize those to market and possibly pass them through the TAMS [sounds like] IIM account or individuals or through the tribe itself depending on which way we want to go. But I didn't want to go through that effort and then being the person that went through that effort, or did we waste our time? So it encouraged me when I heard from the secretary of agriculture asking personally if he was in favor of that, and he is in favor of it. But now we have a new administration. I guess when we get that

big board thing that's going to happen. Then I think I can see why little tribes like the Shoshone-Bannock tribes [inaudible].

Zachary Ducheneaux: It's my understanding, and Mark can correct me if I'm wrong, but my understanding of the whole notion of the RCPP is to develop models that can be replicable in other places. These are just the first five places that we're starting. That's not to say that if Shoshone-Bannock wanted to come over and say, hey, help us with this, too, we could make you part of that program or help you write that program yourself so that you're not doing it out of your own resource. You're using government resources to get that baseline quantified and then take it to the next level.

Mark Rose: That's correct. You're more than welcome to come work in D.C. with us on the RCPP.

Zachary Ducheneaux: Well.

Mark Wadsworth: There was a question that came from USDA, too. It's that if you're currently enrolled such as into CRP, then you could not quantify into the carbon. Now, I don't know whether that's been worked out to get the carbon credit either. But I don't know if we crossed that [indiscernible].

Zachary Ducheneaux: I just take it out of CRP for a year and knock the hell out of it, and say, well, no, we're not sequestering any carbon, and I'll sign us up. But I'll let my

boss know about the offer, Mr. Rose, and I appreciate it. But I really, really love my job. So you'd have to bid pretty high.

Mark Wadsworth: I'll go on record because you know these CRP contracts, you cancel them, you have to pay the money back. Anyway, so it had to be worthwhile.

Zachary Ducheneaux: Yeah, very good.

Mark Wadsworth: I should ask you. Nathan Notah, was he here today?

Zachary Ducheneaux: Nate's been here. I don't know if he is here today. He was supposed to be here to visit.

Mark Wadsworth: No. No. I've haven't spoken to him.

Zachary Ducheneaux: Okay. He's been around. We had an export readiness seminar alongside of our event like we always do. I think we had 10 or 15 tribal vendors in there getting their product ready to get overseas.

Mark Wadsworth: I guess I should have rephrased that he's your main contact person for that.

Zachary Ducheneaux: American Indian Foods Program, yes, sir. But you can reach out to any of our representatives and we'll get you in touch.

Mark Wadsworth: Angela.

Angela Peter: I don't know if you know this. This is my ninth year at IAC. We came here, and probably after the third one, we noticed that we're different. Well, I mean, we notice

it all the time. You know only three. But anyway, that's when we decided that we needed an Alaska Alliance just because we needed to focus on the 229 tribes that are there in the mountains and everything. So I just wanted to say thank you for giving us that foundation, and also to come to our symposium.

Zachary Ducheneaux: You bet.

Angela Peter: I'll send you guys invitations. Definitely it's a lot smaller than this but we're working it.

Zachary Ducheneaux: Every last meeting that you have matters. It's so important to have the opportunity to get out there into the field and have that face-to-face encounter. So we're looking forward to it, and we thank you for participating. We're really glad to see a lot more buzz going on since you guys started to talk. We're getting a lot more issues. Previously, we had one member that was there all the time that had been there since time immemorial, one of our founding members, the [indiscernible], so we knew a lot about reindeer, but we don't know much about what else goes on in Alaska. So you're helping educate us, too.

Angela Peter: I say thank you. Yeah. It's kind of hard to get -- we're a people that are mainly quiet, except, I'm the exception. But, yeah, that's how we talk about it.

Zachary Ducheneaux: I will say that both you and I are exceptional people. How about that? Because we have trouble keeping quiet.

Mark Wadsworth: Sarah.

Sarah Vogel: I just want to thank you again, Zach, and all your people who are wonderful, walk on water and so on, and we appreciate you.

Zachary Ducheneaux: Thank you. I brag on our staff everywhere I go, and I tell people if you're lazy, you'll look good if you surround yourself with good people and leave them the hell alone. I learned that from my dad.

Sarah Vogel: Thank you.

Mark Wadsworth: Yes, Erin.

Erin Parker: First of all, I want to echo what Sarah said. I'm afraid for my work at the initiative especially the youth work that we do like we couldn't do it without the TA network. The TA network has been absolutely amazing in helping get the young people who come to this event, and to all the IAC regional events for youth, and our event in the summer actually get those folks what they need once they get back home. Like they come to the summit with big ideas and then it's so instrumental to have people on the ground, who know how to do those loan applications and get them that assistance.

So I guess this is why I keep harping on this budget thing because I'm just really concerned that if you go away that resource that has been so important and dynamic for our young people is going to be gone. So as a follow-up question, I've been thinking about this and kind of stewing on it for the last five minutes, and also having the inability to keep my mouth shut, what is your cooperative agreement? Like which specific agency is that with? Do you know? Like is it with OSEC?

Zachary Ducheneaux: It's with the Office of Tribal Relations.

Female Voice: It's with OTR.

Zachary Ducheneaux: Yeah. It's coordinated through the secretary of agriculture.

Erin Parker: Do you know what pot of money that comes out of, or what flavor of money that is?

Zachary Ducheneaux: So it's Green Book money that's swept every year from agencies that we do work for and it's the way I understand it. Leslie will probably be able to better address that than me.

Erin Parker: Okay.

Zachary Ducheneaux: Is that correct?

Leslie Wheelock: I'm sorry?

Zachary Ducheneaux: The TA network funding is kind of gathered up from within the department from various agencies that we do some work with off the Green Book.

Leslie Wheelock: Right. That's right. Actually, one of the requests that I have is to have it reevaluated and redistributed pursuant to data that you have provided our office about the different programs that IAC helps to promote because their focus has changed as they've grown and as our focus has changed, and as the Farm Bill came into play. So that's an internal thing.

But we have also presented, for the 2016 budget, we presented a request for increase in their funding, as per the budget that we were given. The increase was not accepted at that point in time, and for fiscal year 2017 there was no ability to request the increase, because of the process there was no ability to get additional funding. So that has to be re-requested for fiscal year '18.

Zachary Ducheneaux: Along that line of the budget request and the budget level that I started out talking about, I think it is important to note that we were originally funded to do seven or eight of these things at \$1.8 million. NRSF 24, 242-A, or whatever it is that's got the five-year conceptual budget, we were supposed to go up to \$2.4 million to do the job we're doing right now from \$1.6,. And if you look at the impact that we're

able to have with \$1.6 million, imagine if we could put four people in Alaska, and another person in every region, the things that we could do.

We've managed to do it on a shoestring budget because our people go around. I want to quote my boss, and I'm going to try to take out the expletives, but we go around addressing GS-15 issues at a GS-6 or GS-7 wage, and we do a good job of it, and we get a lot of things resolved. So I'm really proud of the staff that we've been able to put together and look forward to further developing the staff and getting something going with you up there, Angela.

Mark Wadsworth: Just FYI for you, on our recommendations, we do have that data supporting the TA network at the council back in March of 2015.

Zachary Ducheneaux: Yup, and we appreciate it.

Mark Wadsworth: We have that, we just went through a process of reviewing all the past recommendations and we're highlighting that recommendation again through what we've done.

Zachary Ducheneaux: Very good. Mr. Chairman, if it would help, I do have a copy of the original five-year agreement with me with that budget information. I could submit it for the record so that you've got something to point to in your restated recommendation.

Erin Parker: This is Erin. I would really love to take a look at that. Actually, I'm a little confused as to how it violates the Antideficiency Act this year but it didn't before.

Zachary Ducheneaux: I think we just had the wrong lawyer looking at it, didn't we Leslie? I mean someone who needs a little more outside of the box thinking needs to look at it.

Erin Parker: I feel like at one year, I mean you have one year money and it's obligated and it satisfies the ADA if it's outlaid over five, right?

Leslie Wheelock: This is Leslie. Mr. Chairman, the OGC actually had conferred with our Office of Finance in the way that it's funded. It is possible that there was a misstatement in the way that the first contract was created. That was not an OGC contract and had not been reviewed by OGC to my knowledge. I wasn't there.

Additionally, I'm sure there were other elements moving back and forth because that was created pursuant to the Keepseagle Settlement Agreement, again, for which I wasn't there and that was a five-year requirement. So there was ability to look at it in that request. Janie Hipp is your best historian on that of course, and Ross and Zach.

Our office, I didn't realize the extent of the change in the funding, because I came in in 2013, until we were asked to put together the transition package for the incoming

administration, and they gave us the full eight-year budget for our office. So that's a very interesting illustration of funding, loss of funding and reinstitution of funding both for the IAC contractual arrangement and for our office.

Erin Parker: Right. I just --

Mark Wadsworth: Can I say one more thing?

Erin Parker: Please. Sorry, Mr. Chairman.

Mark Wadsworth: For the record here is that we didn't exactly name IAC because this council had decided that we would not support individual, nonprofit organizations. We're here to help the whole group.

Zachary Ducheneaux: You bet. We're more than happy to compete.

Mark Wadsworth: So in our language, we are supporting the Technical Assistance network. I just wanted to let you know that.

Zachary Ducheneaux: That's fine. If I may Mr. Chairman? To the point that we were the Keepseagle deal and that's why it was a five-year agreement. We tried that argument when we got sequestered because we figured if we were settlement dictated, we should have been funded regardless. When we made that argument, there was a transition person between you and Janie. It fell on deaf ears so we've been going around the country saying the USDA still owes Indian country five years of

technical assistance under that settlement because we clearly are not yet because we tried to get sanctioned as that early on to avoid the sequester of our budget. Our budget was still sequestered, and if that was a settlement contingency or a settlement condition, it should have been immune to that.

Sarah Vogel: This is a question for you, I think, Zach --

Zachary Ducheneaux: Sure.

Sarah Vogel: -- because of your history with IAC. But I remember IAC being active in this field and getting USDA money in the '80s, in the '90s, and the 2000s. You guys have been around a long time, and I know fundings come and gone. But you had funding I think through USDA prior to Keepseagle. I think your experience is one of the reasons why you were selected. It isn't like it's a Johnny-come-lately group saying we can do this. You guys have been doing it and you have a record, and you're in these communities. So can you talk a little about that?

Zachary Ducheneaux: So originally, the IAC was funded through the Bureau of Indian Affairs Appropriation the first three years. When the Clinton administration started to pare back on the federal budget to balance it, it was going to balance on the backs of some of these things. IAC leadership decided it doesn't make sense for us to have a carve-out of resources that our member tribes need. We're going to turn that

back. We're not going to accept that appropriation. We're going to go out and seek funding to do this ever since and we've survived doing work for the United States Department of Agriculture predominantly. We've had some foundation grants along the way as well. But we've been doing USDA outreach grant and contract work since the 1990s with the census.

Sarah Vogel: Have any of those been multi-year contracts?

Zachary Ducheneaux: Yeah. The thing that makes those unique is their \$300,000 appropriation that's funded at \$100,000 over three years so the money is all there. The way this particular budget is scooped every year from the agencies that we're going to assist, there's not a pot of money that we can set aside that's five years' worth that fits. I think that's kind of the hang-up.

Sarah Vogel: Could an agency within USDA commit the money and then scoop the money to repay that branch of USDA?

Zachary Ducheneaux: I have to admit my ignorance and say I don't know. But I like the way you're thinking.

Female Voice: [Inaudible]

Sarah Vogel: Well --

Zachary Ducheneaux: We're going to do everything that we can, USDA funding or not, to maintain the level of operation that the IAC is at. We haven't yet begun to knock on the doors of philanthropy. So as a result we're starting to gather data

on the things that we're doing and you've got a copy of the report. We think that we're putting together a portfolio that is probably fundable in other ways, but we are adamant about not letting the federal government off the hook for fulfilling its obligation to do everything it can to get these services out to Indian country, and we think we've developed a good model for that.

Mark Wadsworth: Thank you, appreciate it.

Zachary Ducheneaux: Thank you all very much. I really appreciate the work you do. I know how hard it is to be away from home this time of year so you have my support. If there is anything further we can do, even if we're not in a meeting setting, get in touch with me. Thanks for your time.

Mark Wadsworth: Have a safe flight. I heard the snow is hitting the --

Zachary Ducheneaux: I know. My phone said, "Welcome to Rapid City, 17 below 0."

Female Voice: Two planes had to turn back from Seattle.

[Off topic conversations 2:54:15 - 2:55:25]

### **Natural Resources Conservation Service Update**

Mark Wadsworth: Our next agenda item is Natural Resources Conservation Service update from fellow board member, Mark Rose.

Mark Rose: Thank you Mr. Chairman. It's good to be here. This is my first time with this group. Tony Kramer who is my boss, deputy chief for programs, I think may have met with the group in the past, and then Jason Weller who is the appointed person on this is our chief, Chief Weller.

So I want to briefly give you all an update of some NRCS activities. As I've mentioned here, ongoing states now have their 2017 program allocations. This year for EQIP, we allocated a little over a billion dollars, and that's not what we were appropriated. So the Farm Bill allows us about \$1.4 billion and under the CR at this point. And that's the total financial assistance and technical assistance. So when I talk about a billion dollars, that's financial assistance going out to the states. There are additional funds that we operate with to help get things on the ground and pay our field folks.

That \$1 billion is quite a bit higher than what we normally have. Let me briefly explain the reason for that. I was talking to Sherry. You may or may not know this but the '14 Farm Bill allowed us to carry over funding, and we call it Know Your Funds. Now, prior to the 14 Farm Bill, anything we got from Congress, you had to have it obligated by the end of September or September 30th of that current fiscal year. Once October hits, it was no longer available for new obligations. So now the '14 Farm Bill allows us to move those funds that are

not obligated at the year we're in, the fiscal year we are in, to the next year and we can continue to do that until expended. It's been good for us. But it has also been challenging for us too. The challenges are our systems, our contracting systems for EQIP and CSP, are set up for things to stop on September 30th, and then start new with new funds. So we had to rebuild our contracting business tools.

We are making a spider web out of them, and they were designed in the early or mid-2000s, 2004 and 2005. As technology goes, usually technology is outdated six months after it has been implemented. So you can see we're working off of a program that is 12-years-old. That's why we've been having some challenges making payments. I've been on my laptop the last two days trying to get some things squared away with challenges but we're getting there and making things happen. But it's good for us because it went up. As I was telling Sherry a little bit ago, when a contract has been implemented, and there's additional dollars in there that weren't used, it gets de-obligated. Now, under the '14 Farm Bill, we can take those and put them to a new contract, whereas before we couldn't. So it's helping to get more conservation on the ground.

Conservation Stewardship Program, like I mentioned earlier, I mentioned the IAC, and I think I may have mentioned here that we have reworked the program for '17 to make it look more like

EQIP. If a producer walked into an office prior to this rework and asked about CSP and said how did you come up with this payment? Well, our field office staff really couldn't explain it because everything happened in what is called a black box. We put the inputs in, it comes back out, and here's your payment.

Now we can explain, this is why you're getting your payment. This is the resource concerns you're addressing and the enhancements you're doing. The payments schedule lists out what is actually going into that payment. So now our field staff can explain to the producers, and the producers can understand what they're doing, and why they're getting their payment, and what the enhancement's for.

So that's really kind of a high cut overview of the new CSP. We are open. Application periods are open now for '17 through February 3rd. After February, we are going to make an announcement for renewals of contracts that I believe are either five-year contracts. I think there are 2012 contracts that can be eligible for renewal if I got my math right. So those will be coming up as well.

The Agricultural Conservation Easement Program - states were announcing opportunities for wetlands reserve, working with partners for also the agricultural land easements in addition to that. RCPP, we heard a lot about that today. The fiscal year

'17 awards will be announced later this month by the chief, so we're looking forward to doing that. The fiscal year '18 announcement should go out sometime in early calendar year '17, so January-February timeframe. So keep your eyes open for that one as well.

I will mention that in fiscal year '14-'15, the RCPP, we had 13 tribal partners that were the lead in a project. And then in 2016, we had nine tribal partners that were the lead in projects. I don't have the total dollar amount for '14-'15. But for '16, it's a little over \$19 million. The tribes have been benefitting from within RCPP.

CIG, the Conservation Innovation Grants, that is currently open for '17. They close, I believe, January 9th. We already talked about the control of land issue. We're working on the payment schedules that I talked about. Sherry and I were talking at one of the breaks. Hopefully, you all are aware that historically underserved producers and tribes are eligible for advance payments under EQIP. The '08 Farm Bill allowed for up to 30 percent. The '14 Farm Bill allows for up to 50 percent. Hopefully, you all are aware of that. Hopefully, our field offices are telling the eligible producers that it is available. The 50 percent is available. We want to make sure that is close to when you are going to get ready to start implementing the practice. There is a 90-day timeframe that you have to start

implementing that practice once you receive your advance payment. We still need to see it get implemented completely and certified within a reasonable timeframe. But there are flexibilities a state conservationist has in making sure to work with you, or work with the producer to get it done.

I mentioned high tunnels and had a little high tunnel project pointed out at the IAC meeting yesterday. That is very popular, our high tunnel practice. Alaska happens to be the greatest number of high tunnels. There's over 400 we've got in Alaska that I know of. We're getting more into the urban areas as well with high tunnels. We're working with the Risk Management Agency to provide additional funding to the 16 Agricultural Management Assistance AMA states to receive funding. So we have 16 states that receive funding from NRCS. That's in conjunction with Risk Management funds. So NRCS has appropriated a very small amount of dollars for the Agricultural Management Assistance. It only goes to those 16 states identified in the statute.

Now Risk Management has come to us. They say we have some dollars available. They are actually crop insurance refunds that have been provided back to producers. It amounts to a very small amount of money in the big picture. What they would rather see us do rather than providing that as a reimbursement back to the producer, they may pay thousands of dollars in a

premium but it's pennies on the dollar. They would get back probably even less than a penny on the dollar.

Josiah Griffin: I apologize for interrupting.

Mark Rose: Go ahead, Josiah.

Josiah Griffin: This is Josiah Griffin. I just wanted to point out that we are no longer in quorum and can no longer conduct official business.

Mark Rose: Okay. But I can still speak, right? Okay, good.

Sarah Vogel: And we can still listen.

Mark Rose: Good. So anyway, we are working with Risk Management to provide additional dollars to the AMA states, and the focus will be on high tunnels. So it will be an opportunity that is coming up. We have not announced that yet. I know we're on a public record but it will come out shortly. You have advanced notice.

One thing that I would like to make sure that tribes are aware of, it was under the 2008 Farm Bill, and it's also under the 2014 Farm Bill for EQIP. There is a provision called alternative funding arrangements only available to tribes for EQIP. It's where the tribe enters into an agreement with NRCS. We provide you the financial assistance dollars. We could also provide you the technical assistance dollars if you have the capacity for technical assistance. The tribe will enter into

EQIP contracts with tribal members and producers, and you will manage those funds. So if there is a million dollars of EQIP dedicated to this tribe in the agreement, the tribe will manage the million dollars; we don't. Otherwise, if it's us managing it, we're going to enter into contracts with each individual tribal member, or we could have a tribal contract as I mentioned. We could do that also, one contract with the tribe. Go ahead.

Sarah Vogel: I was wondering, how many tribes have taken you up on that?

Mark Rose: None to my knowledge. There needs to be some capacity to manage the money. I'm sure there are tribes that have that. Also, we need to determine whether the capacity is there for the technical assistance whether it's going to be us or the tribe or a combination of both. So it's not new on the books. It's just going to be a new way that we have to figure out how to do business now.

I do know that Keisha Tatem, the state conservationist in Arizona has been discussing this with us and looking at the Navajo Nation as a possibility. So I know there is discussion going on there. But it's an opportunity that I think the tribe should be aware of. We still have eligibility requirements that have to be met. We have payment limitations that have to be met. DUNS and SAM was mentioned this morning. That still has

to be met. So those types of things still have to be met on the eligibility side.

Now, we also have an alternative funding arrangement under RCPP as well. That is by statute. We have one AFA in New Mexico under RCPP. That's with the New Mexico Association of Conservation Districts and then in an Acequia project. So that is sort of a test for RCPP. Under RCPP, that AFA is open to any organization, whereas under EQIP, general EQIP, it's only available to the tribes. So if you have an RCPP project, you have the capacity - I'm going to stress - you got to have the capacity to be able to manage the monies, contract, and then we will work with the partner under RCPP to make sure eligibility is met, so just something to think about and make notes of. Anymore questions, Sarah, on that one? You're thinking.

Sarah Vogel: Yup. First of all I was trying to keep up with all your acronyms which meant that I was on a 30-second delay.

Mark Rose: Which one can I help you with that you remember?

Sarah Vogel: But I was just wondering, granted that not all tribes are ready, but probably some are, and yet everybody got a lot on their plate. And there are quite a number of Native American organizations that, you know, like there's one body that gets together every year and they just deal with stuff

like easements. I don't know if you're networked in with all those professional --

Mark Rose: I would have to check with Barry Hamilton who is our tribal liaison, who I check with.

Sarah Vogel: Yeah. There are so many.

Mark Rose: Right.

Sarah Vogel: It's a whole another world --

Mark Rose: Sure.

Sarah Vogel: -- of those professional associations that meet on an annual basis. But to the degree that there are folks who are interested in taking you up on that availability because I think it would work beautifully. It would be exactly like this re-lending programs that have been so successful with the Native CDFIs. And the Native CDFIs, I think, are in a position where they are working with the local people. They can do the assistance that is necessary. I have a feeling on these EQIP programs, and some of the NRCS programs, if they had a local person hands on, working to work with them, there would be such fast progress. So I think that concept you're talking about with the tribes is a really, really good one, and it should work and I encourage you to get the word out.

Mark Rose: Sure.

Sarah Vogel: And help people to get to the point where they can do it, and then once one or two or a few do it, you need that pioneer. I nominate Sherry as the pioneer.

Mark Rose: We have had individual tribal contracts. Prior to the '14 Farm Bill we were doing up to the maximum amount of a contract which is \$300,000 or \$450,000. If a tribe had more than that, we would have multiple contracts. But in the '14 Farm Bill, we eliminated that requirement of multiple contracts with the tribes. We have well over million dollar contracts with some of the tribes. I know there are some in Alaska that are that way.

Sarah Vogel: I think it's probably pretty relatively, I'm saying, relatively easy to reach a tribe and their tribal land. The difficulty is to reach down into the allotted fee [sounds like] land of the local farmers and ranchers who are tribal members but ranching on the reservation. They face a lot of challenges. So if they have somebody local like a Mark kind of guy, or a Sherry kind of person, or Gilbert, you know. Anyway, that's very encouraging that you have that capacity.

Mark Rose: Sure.

Sarah Vogel: I hope somebody does it.

Mark Rose: My recommendation is to start with your state conservationists, and sometimes when I go out in the field, Mark-Rose-said things come up. So Mark Rose said go to your

state conservationists. He said to ask you about alternative funding arrangements. If they are not sure then say let's get me on the phone or one of my EQIP team on the phone from headquarters and we can have that conversation as to what we need to do. Like I said, Keisha Tatem in Arizona is initiating those discussions with the Navajo Nation.

Sarah Vogel: Yeah. It's these big organizations like -- well, you're just at IAC. But there are things like that for land managers. Am I wrong? Mark goes to a lot of meetings.

Mark Wadsworth: Me?

Sarah Vogel: You, yeah.

Mark Wadsworth: I used to go to a lot of meetings. I'm lucky to get out once or twice a year now. Are we talking about the RCPP or the AFA or --?

Mark Rose: Well, really both. The RCPP is one where that alternative funding arrangement is really open to any organization that is awarded.

Mark Wadsworth: We were where we've been in an application this year not through my program but through our water resource department.

Mark Rose: Right. AFAs have a little more restrictions under the RCPP because I believe it has to do with water authorities. Tribes, I believe, could be possibly eligible without going to check the statute on that. I wouldn't see why

they wouldn't be. They're eligible under EQIP, so RCPP, they should be. But water authorities and irrigation districts under RCPP, whereas you get outside of RCPP under general, it's only tribes. The water authorities and irrigation districts would not be eligible for a full alternative funding arrangement. So it's limited within RCPP. It's a little more broader but it's limited to RCPP, in RCPP.

Two more things - the last thing I have. I just wanted to mention Barry sent me this here a couple of days ago. We have an action plan. It's dated September 12th. I'm not sure if you guys are aware of this. Josiah, I will send this document to you for the record. Working effectively with tribal entities and tribal colleges and universities action plan, so there's several pages here. I'm just going to briefly describe what I see here. It's to promote and build capacity within 30 tribal colleges and universities, tribal conservation districts, tribal conservation entities and organizations with technical service capabilities to become a technical service provider. We refer to those as TSPs, or a recommending organization.

So the action plan is to work with tribes and universities. We utilize technical service providers extensively. It's a third extension to us for our technical assistance. They have to meet specific requirements. It's just like having an NRCS specialist, only they're a private entity or organization or

individuals doing this so they go through training to do this. So this action plan is to get more technical service providers engaged with the tribes. That way you have the capacity to provide technical assistance and get paid for it, and that will be through the producer.

Mark Wadsworth: Mark, for the record, that was a discussion that came from our council here.

Mark Rose: Good. Great, it's good to know. That's why I'm not going to give any of the detail out. I'm glad you have it.

Last thing I have, and I was alerted to an email from an individual in Nebraska this morning that a number of jobs are posted for NRCS on USAJOBS, a very short turnaround time. The ones that got posted today, they are all over the United States. They are not only for current USDA employees, current NRCS employees, but also open to the general public. So if you know of anyone who is interested in working for NRCS, I would encourage them to get on. You might want to encourage them to get on USAJOBS this weekend and get their application in because they have about a five to seven day window of opportunity.

Angela Peter: Hi, Angela from Alaska. I would just like to thank NRCS. We have an excellent state conservationist in Bob Jones. We wouldn't be where we are without NRCS' backing.

Mark Rose: Thank you.

Angela Peter: One of the issues that we're trying to remediate up in Alaska is getting interns. We have internship under the RCPP right now and we have a former NRCS employee of 20 years that's contracting with us up there and we're going to try to get our first intern going. But then we have another program that we're creating to divide Alaska in regions and actually have a promising person from each of those regions to try to get our own people. You know growing our own people to help our own people kind of thing.

Mark Rose: Thank you. Okay. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, unless there is anything else?

Mark Wadsworth: So just for my personal, well, everybody, you said the current annual budget for EQIP this year is one --

Mark Rose: So we're likely to be appropriated. If we ever get a full appropriation it's about \$1.4 billion. About \$900 million of that is for financial assistance. Now the difference between the \$900 million and the little over a billion dollars that I mentioned, the financial assistance, that I think 150 or 300 -- I can't do the math in my head, is what has been rolled over from previous years. So beginning in fiscal year '14, '15, and '16 has been a carryover. It has been unobligated, or it has been de-obligated from contracts that have been completed. So it just kind of continues to roll over. Like I said it was very good for us, very good for the producers because we are

able to reuse the dollars that we didn't use in prior years or didn't need to use in prior years.

Mark Wadsworth: I think, you know for our council, when we first started this annual appropriation for EQIP, it was \$200 million.

Mark Rose: In 1996, yes. The authorized level this year - I can't remember what my chart said yesterday - in my mind was, I want to say \$1.65 billion is the authorized level. So you can see where that difference of what we're likely to get apportioned versus the authorized level. I think next year goes up to \$1.75.

Mark Wadsworth: Thank you, Mark.

Mark Rose: Thank you.

Mark Wadsworth: Looks like we're right at noon time. So you want to break for how long?

Sarah Vogel: Half hour?

Mark Wadsworth: When do you have to take off?

Sarah Vogel: We have to leave at about two-ish.

Mark Wadsworth: Everybody happy with half an hour? So we'll have about an hour-and-a-half. If you guys want to bring up something during that time period to get it done. Sounds good, see you guys back here in half an hour.

[Off topic conversations 3:19:48 - 3:23:31]

Sarah Vogel: This is Sarah. I think the concern now is that when we opened this meeting we were saying this could be the last meeting. This could be -- maybe we have one more meeting. This is our one bite at the apple. There is a whole lot at stake. There is huge turnover with our federal members. So we all have to lift this as high as we can. So to have somebody who is in town who has missed this whole meeting and the whole introduction, and the running through of the whole history, all our pending recommendations, all the work that's under way - to miss is disconcerting. And, yes, granted, we have the right to kick somebody off after missing X number of meetings, but if somebody is to be in town and not interested enough to come is a different issue. Perhaps they are not interested.

Female Voice: [Inaudible]

Josiah Griffin: We can make sure that that's included.

[Inaudible]

Mark Wadsworth: All right. Now, I guess we can return.

Sarah Vogel: Resume.

Angela Peter: Resume, not return. That's scary for you.

Mark Wadsworth: We have situations when Friday afternoon, I don't know what I'm saying sometimes. It comes out. Anyway, can we start the meeting?

### **Council Working Session**

Mark Wadsworth: All right. The item after is Council Working Session continued. We do have two members that will be probably be taking off at approximately 2:00. Is that the timeframe? We're just going to open it up. I think everybody has enough of what has been done in the past. I think that probably the one thing that we should get on the board here is the scheduling of our next meetings for the year, and then where we want to go. There is a discussion that possibly we should have the next meeting in D.C. due to the rumors that there may be a hiring travel freeze for federal employees, who knows. But if that is coming true - and with the new administration and the new appointees we would be able to meet with them at that time. So I guess we want to do this quarterly. What would be appropriate, April, or last part of March?

Sarah Vogel: April is better for me.

Female Voice: April is good.

Mark Wadsworth: Can we do that the first or second week in April?

Josiah Griffin: Yes sir. This is Josiah. I'd be happy to look at USDA's calendar for our departmental conference rooms to see when our major conference rooms are available to host for this meeting.

Mark Wadsworth: Thank you. Anybody strictly opposed or --? Also, it was mentioned to me in the past that, well, while we are at the meeting, we should do some thank you letters for the past council members that were here in gratitude for their service. If there are any other comments on what we should do with that, we will be saying thank you.

Sarah Vogel: I have one small suggestion. I think if the thank you letter could come from Secretary Vilsack, it would be incredibly meaningful. I mean we, as a council, could send them a thank you, too, but I think to have it come from the secretary, I would recommend that.

Mark Wadsworth: That pretty much can be handled within OTR without a formal recommendation. So we are looking in March or April, and let's just do some planning here. After April, we could probably have it in a location other than D.C. at a sponsoring tribe, if that's the door. The last one was at my personal tribe, the Shoshone-Bannock tribe, and we had that during one of the driest parts of the season, but it can't be helped during the timeframe. So if we want to look in to the June, July scenario.

Erin Parker: I think, oh, yeah, that will be interesting. If you want youth involvement, we'll have over 100 Native youth from around the country in Arkansas from July 17th to 25th. They'll be at our event. We can definitely find you a meeting

room with the university, or we can invite as many youth as you want to come during the comment period. I'm sure they have a lot of thoughts. They definitely did. Last year, they filled out FSA loans. They had folks from FSA here, and they filled out loans onsite, and then spontaneously began to give the FSA folks feedback. Because a lot of them had done the process before, so they had thoughts on how it could be better, more streamlined, and more youth friendly. They are rock stars. I mean, I would love to offer them. I know we're not a tribe, but we [cross-talking].

Sarah Vogel: I love that idea.

Mark Wadsworth: Also, there was possibility of Alaska, it has always been mentioned if that's still on the table. Also, Navajo has made an offer.

Female Voice: [Off mic] [Inaudible]

Mark Wadsworth: Yes. Angie?

Angela Peter: Yeah, definitely Alaska, everybody that I talked to wants to go. You know, all of us can come up there. Likely it will take a lot more planning than just document. I'm not saying anything about the states that, you know. It can take a lot more, a lot more funding, a lot more planning for Alaska but we definitely would really like you guys to come up in the summer.

Female Voice: [Off-mic] [Inaudible]

Sarah Vogel: I'm a little concerned about the funding with Alaska. We, the northwest area went to Alaska and I think all we did was go to Anchorage, and it was very crazy. I'd love to do it.

I also wanted to circle back a little bit. I think the focus of this council is on the individual Native American farmers and ranchers. So you know maximizing opportunities to meet the youth would certainly do that. Tribally-run agriculture which is all around and that has its own challenges and so on, but the challenges for a tribally-run farm are less than they are for individuals. So you know, Roselynn, I love the idea going to see your farm, but, again, I think the focus is on the individuals. So I think -- I just heard this idea about going to the University of Arkansas with the youth. But that ties in with the next generation. I don't know. It's ringing bells in my head.

Mark Wadsworth: Just my personal comment, too, and this is just personal, but we do have to recognize, too, that Navajo is not just NAPI. There are a lot of tribal producers out there.

Sarah Vogel: Of course, yeah. It was just about -- yeah.

Angela Peter: I love the idea of the fact that we went from just D.C. and certain places, but now we have hosts of the different countries. You know like Idaho and North Carolina,

and I think that really brings it right to the table because you know who we are.

Sarah Vogel: Well, if we go to the Navajo, then also I'd like to focus on the individuals.

Roselynn Yazzie: Mr. Chair, I looked at the farming just because of availability of facilities, the closeness to the airports, and I believe they would sponsor the meetings to happen there. It's local and you could have your individual farmers, ranchers to be there present, and they know NAPI very well. So it's an open door about more or less using their facilities is what I am looking at.

Sarah Vogel: Thank you.

Erin Parker: In terms of our event, too, we're going to do this every summer. So if we go to Navajo and do that that summer, you're always welcome at our event. The summit youth would show you a great time. I'm sure. But we will be doing this as long as we can. I'm sure --

Mark Wadsworth: I am also going to talk to [indiscernible] because I have worked also with C-suite in the past, and I think we could just announce it to the southwest region. I tried to do the northwest region but the timeframe for everything just got so tight. I was just able to just concentrate on one reservation which we do appreciate. But it's just a huge

region. There are a lot of producers out there trying to [inaudible].

Female Voice: [Off mic] Just to clarify, we're going to do two more meetings. One with will be at the reservation in the [indiscernible] and the other one will be youth [indiscernible]?

Mark Wadsworth: Well, the way it reads is we will have three travel meetings, and one conference call generally that we try to do on quarterly, or do we have enough to work on the 2017 year?

Josiah Griffin: Yes, sir. This is Josiah. So we have at this time enough funding coming down the pipeline for one additional meeting. As I mentioned before, the Office of Tribal Relations, working with Leslie, will still go hat in hand to other agencies asking for additional funding in support of this council. Traditionally, or historically, when the council first started, we had two in-person meetings and one teleconference. That has since changed to three in-person meetings typically held about every four months which assists with planning and making sure that the *Federal Register's* notice is out in time.

Mark Wadsworth: So to stretch this out, we'll have a meeting in June, July, late June or early July, or whatever comes out it would be. Then our next quarter will be like in September, and then we'll go back here again in December. Is that the schedule that we want to commit to?

Female Voice: Josiah, did you just say there was at least one more meeting besides those two and this one? Or is it a total of three and one teleconference, or a total of four and one teleconference?

Josiah Griffin: So to the best of our ability and pending budget appropriations, we can have as many meetings as the council seeks to have. So traditionally that meant that we had three in-person meetings per year, and whether you're looking at a calendar year or a fiscal year, that number stayed the same.

Mark Wadsworth: And then also throughout, we try to schedule it so that we have the committees meet before each face-to-face, bring their concerns at that quarterly meeting for the council to act upon.

Sherry Crutcher: This is Sherry. So if we do December, then we do January, February, March, then April, May, June, July, August and September. September will just end out the fiscal year. So it would be March, June and September, or July, the first part of July.

Female Voice: July is better.

Mark Wadsworth: I think that when you guys went out hat in hand and asked for funding to help support this council, it was regularly, they gave the money. You know, whoever department from APHIS to RMA to other agencies who were willing to support this. I think what's kind of up in the air, it sounds like

we're going to receive from that effort, but we can firmly commit to the next meeting in D.C., and we can commit the next one in July.

Sherry Crutcher: April and July?

Josiah Griffin: Most likely yes, sir.

Mark Wadsworth: So we can firmly commit to a schedule up to that time, and I guess we could reschedule the next half year after that.

Sarah Vogel: If we were to come back here a year from now, that's in the fiscal year too.

Female Voice: That's what I explained. Yeah there --

Mark Wadsworth: You work with D.C. and then I think that Sarah you can confirm it, the Navajo situation and get the invitations out and notices. I guess. It would help me there.

[Indiscernible]

Josiah Griffin: It certainly is appreciated [sounds like].

Female Voice: [Off-mic] [Inaudible] It could be either Navajo or Arkansas?

Mark Wadsworth: Uh-huh.

Female Voice: Okay.

Josiah Griffin: Sir, if I may? Again, this is Josiah. So in planning the meetings, it is also helpful for us to have agenda items that the council would like to discuss in advance. Historically, those have come from the subcommittees, but to the

extent that the subcommittees are not able to meet, and just having that feedback is helpful.

Female Voice: [Off-mic] Josiah, how difficult are the phone conferences in fact [sounds like]? Is that an easy process or it seems like you take your turns [inaudible]?

Josiah Griffin: This is Josiah again. It does require a little bit of coordination because we typically have relied on our office teleconference line, so it's a matter of seeing -- based on our calendar when there is availability.

Female Voice: [Off mic] Just because [indiscernible] bring in some of our recommendation down [indiscernible], and give them up to the different subcommittees. You know we don't have to look at -- I don't think it's [indiscernible] the phone companies. I don't know if it would require that, but it might [indiscernible] to say that every subcommittee would have met at least once before the [inaudible].

Leslie Wheelock: Mr. Chairman, prior to Josiah's joining our office, we had I think one video conference or teleconference for which we used FSA's conference room. And there are a couple of other spaces, lines or systems available to us within the department that we can use. So if ours turns out to be a bit of hindrance, there are others available.

The other thing that we had trouble with a prior council was accessibility to a conference facility, conference phone, or

teleconference, and we actually had paid individuals who couldn't -- who didn't have the technology. I mean, Skype works pretty well. But they didn't have the technology or access to the technology to come in to a USDA office near them to use that office's technology. Thank you.

Mark Wadsworth: Yes, Sarah.

Sarah Vogel: I think the telephone conference calls were easier than the attempt at the Skype call because of the different technology problems that many people seem to be experiencing, whereas, the phone calls were smooth.

Leslie Wheelock: Yeah.

Sarah Vogel: But that's an option.

Mark Wadsworth: So do we need to make a decision for July, where we're going to go?

Josiah Griffin: Respectfully, sir, if I may? So we do have at least a little bit of time between now and then. For a *Federal Register's* notice, I just need to get that sent out 45 days in advance of the meeting, so as long as we are able to confirm a date by that timeframe, then I think that we have that flexibility.

Female Voice: [Off mic] [Indiscernible] April meetings is that we could have had you know, like present options [indiscernible]. I don't know. Just inform us of what we could [indiscernible].

Josiah Griffin: I'll defer to the council on that decision.

Angela Peter: I'd like to see what we would be doing when we go there. Arkansas will be the youth but Navajo would be the land. So there are two different -- my only deal is Arizona is so hot in July.

Erin Parker: I can't do much better for you in Arkansas I'm afraid.

Angela Peter: No, I don't -- I'm just kidding.

Erin Parker: Yeah, I was going to say Arkansas is no better. It's humid.

Angela Peter: Really? I don't know. It's got that wet, humid feeling then, oh, my gosh. Can we meet down there in December?

Mark Wadsworth: As Erin says, they have this annual, so we can maybe do it next year if the funding is available.

Angela Peter: I'm game for either one. It'd be nice to know what we're going to do when we go there.

Josiah Griffin: Mr. Chairman, historically speaking, when we did visit Idaho or where there was a tour that was before or after the meeting, we were not able to provide reimbursement for that time because it was not in line with the official meeting, if that makes sense. So I just want to let you know that if there is a tour off-site that happens for a day's length of

time, and any member has to arrive a day early, we are not able to provide for hotel or per diem reimbursement for that extra day.

Angela Peter: Well, I would think that it would be kind of set up like this to where we would be included with something else that's going on so that when we have our open session, they are more than welcome to come in and address the council. That gives them their right, whether it be youth or ranchers. You give them enough notice to know that we're going to be in the area at that time, so they could bring their concerns to us.

That would be my suggestion as to make sure that when we meet, it's kind of the same situation that's going on here because everybody with IAC and the other meetings, I know there was housing, IAC. I know there were several things going on at the same time as it is here. So I would like to coordinate into something that's going on to give the producers and the youngsters the chance to bring it to us. Kill two birds with one stone I guess I'm trying to say, you know? Rather than going out to do a tour of something. Yeah, we'd love to see what's in that state but we're conducting business.

Josiah Griffin: Mr. Chairman, Sarah has a point.

Mark Wadsworth: Yes.

Sarah Vogel: Two questions. One is, whether sufficient time would be available between April and July meetings. If

that gives enough time for preparation, I mean not so much for the *Federal Register* notice but for the host. Then the second question is or not a question but a comment. I'd be perfectly comfortable with the officers and the OTR making a decision.

Erin Parker: I agree. This is Erin.

Mark Wadsworth: I just want to say, reiterate what Josiah was trying to put across is that through our committee meetings or through our input of what we're addressing or our concerns come from our places, so that's what he was alluding to that will be on the agenda for USDA to attend. I guess as a tribal focus, I don't even really think we had a presentation from my tribe about my tribe, or anything like that. It was just more geared towards the council.

Leslie Wheelock: Mark, we did. We had a tour of your reservation which was about your tribe, and pretty awesome. I mean about your tribal work on the range and on agriculture. To my knowledge, we haven't had a real history tour anywhere, although, if you were riding around with Mary Thompson in North Carolina, you got a lot of history, recent history. But I think it's all, as I can recall, all of our trips, with the exception of the one with Jerry, have been super focused on the land and the people who are there including the schools and the farm to school programs and all of that. So the people who came in and talked to us when we go out, I think have made a huge difference

in the variety of perspectives that we've been getting in these meetings, in the local, in Indian country. Thank you.

Erin Parker: [Indiscernible] I also just want to point out that the University of Arkansas at Fayetteville, well it's in Arkansas. It's still an hour from Oklahoma and the border there so several people could still come over from Cherokee, Choctaw, Chickasaw, those other tribes so you would still have some tribal perspective as well as the youth perspective.

Mark Wadsworth: Yes, Josiah.

Josiah Griffin: Thank you sir. Tagging on to Leslie's point, to the extent that time has allowed, we have tried to pay deference to our host to see what priorities or what agenda items they may feel most interested in seeing. And so when it was held in North Carolina, we asked Mary. When it was held in Idaho, there was a question asked to you as well, sir.

Mark Wadsworth: Yeah, CRP from USDA.

Josiah Griffin: Yes, sir.

Mark Wadsworth: Okay, and I think, correct me if I'm wrong, you wanted to defer to the council where you wanted the meeting and then did you guys say you wanted to defer it to --

Leslie Wheelock: Mr. Chairman, I think we said these guys and you, and our vice chair.

Female Voice: That's what I heard. It's up to you two.

Leslie Wheelock: I mean if you want also we can definitely -- to Sarah's point, the time, if we wait until April to decide, that timeline works for me, too.

Mark Wadsworth: From past experience, the more time you have to work, the better coordinated.

Sarah Vogel: The better. Yeah.

Mark Wadsworth: Because I was -- everywhere.

Tawney Brunsch: [Off mic]: But I think if we make a decision after the April meeting that will give four months [inaudible]. But I think we can look at them by December or D.C. in April, and then make a decision in April, make a decision in July [inaudible].

Mark Wadsworth: Are there any other key items we need to address?

Tawney Brunsch: [Off mic] Tawney again. I was taking notes as to where we were reviewing the recommendations, and it feels like we don't [indiscernible] the priority items [indiscernible] recommendations and if we decide whatever. However we are going to look this up if that would be again through what Leslie suggested yesterday, if we could work this into somehow a document that would be reviewed in the transition plan. That would almost guarantee that it would be [indiscernible] on January 20th, so if you want to keep that as the focus and we never do the ongoing recommendation. I feel

like I at least need a better understanding of what the subcommittees are, and looking at what [indiscernible] or if we could add some because if I remember correctly in July we decided that the subsistence subcommittee included the youth and education piece. Angela, is that the way you remember it? Because I see that there is not a separate youth and educational or even education [indiscernible]. There's not a separate subcommittee for that, or there is on the agenda items but not in -- there is in the recommendation matrix but not on the agenda.

Josiah Griffin: So if I may clarify that, Madame Vice Chair. The recommendation matrix in the subcommittee section lists the subcommittee that was in existence at that time that that recommendation came out of. Per my records in the July meeting, and I apologize because there is some technical difficulty with the transcript to where we only have partial information for that meeting. The subcommittees were narrowed down to three.

So at that point, as it lists in the agenda, we have the credit and credit desert subcommittee which looks at finance access and developing finance opportunities. We have the land management subcommittee that delves into the land managing agencies and how there can be better collaboration and partnership. And then the sustainability subcommittee at that

point was rolled in to include subsistence, climate change, and also youth and education.

Tawney Brunsch: [Off mic] [Inaudible] that we need to look at maybe based on the number of action items or addressing each issue as maybe we want to break that down into separate [inaudible] focus on the youth. That is what the other subcommittees are favoring [sounds like].

Female Voice: I agree. Yeah.

Mark Wadsworth: Do you have a listing of who were the chairs on each subcommittee that you developed? Just for the general knowledge of everyone.

Leslie Wheelock: I probably have it.

Sarah Vogel: Tawney was --

Female Voice: [Off mic] We don't know, would we?

Sherry Crutcher: Mr. Chairman?

Male Voice: Yes, Sherry?

Sherry Crutcher: I would like a full listing because I'm new, and I don't know the subcommittees. Who are they? What do they do? What are their criteria? I would like something, and you can just send it in an email. I don't need the whole paperwork or whatever. I just need to know who they are and what they do. You know what I mean?

Josiah Griffin: Okay. I would be happy to send out a formal description of each of the subcommittees.

Sherry Crutcher: It doesn't have to be formal, Josiah. Just give me the updates so when you guys say subcommittees to youth, or subcommittees to this, at least I'll know. Right now I don't know.

Josiah Griffin: Respectfully, and I defer to Madame Vice Chair, if I'm misstating anything. I think the discussion at this point is to identify where there should be either reduced or expanded subcommittees, and once we have those items narrowed down, then we would be better able to identify the purpose of those subcommittees.

Sherry Crutcher: Because I want to know which part of the recommendation.

Leslie Wheelock: Excuse me. We did that at the last meeting. We consolidated. I'm actually trying to pull out my notes from the last meeting. But we consolidated into three different subcommittees. We have one on youth, one on finance, and the third one has an interesting name, resilience, because we put climate change together with subsistence and some other bits. Conservation I think is also in that group.

Female Voice: [Off mic] [Inaudible]

Leslie Wheelock: No, no. Youth has its own. I was just talking really fast. So one is access to capital and related, two is youth, and three is resilience.

Female Voice: [Off mic] And that includes land management?

Leslie Wheelock: I don't know where land management went. I think it does. I think the idea was the things that didn't fit in those first two that are very specific went into the resilience piece because they had a lot to do with how do we continue moving forward given where we are.

Sarah Vogel: I believe Jerry was the chair of the youth and education committee, and Tawney was the head of credit desert.

Sherry Crutcher: Yeah with that. See this discussion that you guys -- I'm like, you know. The other question I would have is where would I get the transcripts from your last meeting, so I can update and won't be so lost? And then with all these recommendations, I mean they make a lot of sense. They are understandable. But which subcommittees are handling which recommendation is what I would like to know because I'm new.

Leslie Wheelock: That's a really good question because we don't identify those topics.

Sherry Crutcher: And I wouldn't know because I'm new to the whole -- and then I want to read what you guys did at your last meeting. So at least be updated.

Sarah Vogel: The bylaws of a specific timeline for the minutes being shared and Sedelta. The transcript is another issue.

Sherry Crutcher: Well, anything to give me what was brought forward. Just information, you know?

Erin Parker: Sherry, this is Erin, and I am going to email you a link right now to all of the transcripts. It's on our Council for Native American Farming and Ranching website.

Sherry Crutcher: Okay, cool.

Erin Parker: The minutes are --

Female Voice: [Off mic] Unfortunately [indiscernible] are hard to understand and the minutes are [inaudible] [cross-talking], and EQIP update or whatever [cross-talking].

Sherry Crutcher: Like I said, that's all I want is an update. Yeah.

Josiah Griffin: Yes, Ma'am.

Sherry Crutcher: Okay. Thank you.

Leslie Wheelock: Madam Vice Chair. I misspoke. The third is sustainability, not resilience.

Tawney Brunsch: [Off mic]: Okay, so it's credit, land management, and sustainability?

Leslie Wheelock: I'm looking at actual notes, not anything that's been [cross-talking]. Credits, I thought the other one was youth and education, CDFI, Indian country --

Erin Parker: Regardless, of what they were, what are they going to be?

Tawney Brunsch: [Off mic] So with that then, wouldn't it be reasonable to look at, refer to our recommendation tracker and go by that subcommittee column and take a look at what we currently have listed there? I was just thinking that we have enough items where we could keep the credit committee, obviously. I'm going to stick with my original recommendation or opinion that we do need youth and education be its own subcommittee. And then I guess I would leave it more to you guys to work on that more, if you need land management again separately or if you want to represent subsistence separately?

Angela Peter: [Off mic] No. I like subsistence with the climate change just because, I mean, it's Alaska. I'll talk to everybody about climate change, but it definitely will happen [inaudible].

Tawney Brunsch: [Off mic] Okay. So if we go with subsistence as the third, is there a need for --

Sarah Vogel: I don't think we call it subsistence though. We call it something other than subsistence because climate change is not the same as subsistence.

Leslie Wheelock: I think we call it food security.

Angela Peter: Or sustainability.

Sarah Vogel: Sustainability.

Leslie Wheelock: It was called sustainability, but I think when we started talking about what subsistence is part of, it's part of the food security piece.

Angela Peter: Well, that's fine. Food security does sound --

Female Voice: Good.

Angela Peter: Yeah. Because looking at what we're talking about, I mean the big room [sounds like].

Sarah Vogel: And if anybody got excited about it, they could also appeal in the food programs, USDA food programs which are a hot topic.

Tawney Brunsch: So if we go with food security, then we'll also have a need for land management because I see a number of items that are under land management specifically as a subcommittee or do you feel like that could be adequately covered under food security?

Angela Peter: [Off mic] I don't think so. I mean, I could be wrong, but I think that's a lot to put on subsistence and global warming is big. It's global warming [indiscernible]. So there's no land management?

Tawney Brunsch: I see several items and I think that's pretty much anything to do that -- you know, we've talked a lot about the NRCS items --

Sarah Vogel: Forest Service would go in there. And then there's almost one for administration.

Tawney Brunsch: Which would include what?

Sarah Vogel: Well, funding for the Technical Assistance Network would be a big one, the staffing, training, those things which we had a number of those left open, getting the BIA here.

Female Voice: True, the things you monitor for OGC [cross-talking]

Tawney Brunsch: It would be kind of nice to have a separate one.

Female Voice: I would vote to be on that committee.

Tawney Brunsch: Whoever is taking notes, Sedelta, could you read those back then. That would be five, right?

Sedelta Oosahwee: [Off mic] [Inaudible] on the food security? What did you change that one to, because it went from subsistence to climate change, food security --

Sarah Vogel: It's food security.

Tawney Brunsch: And credit and administration and youth and land management.

Sarah Vogel: I think that's good. And I think many of us will have to be on two committees.

Tawney Brunsch: We'll have to be in a couple probably.

Sarah Vogel: Yeah.

Josiah Griffin: And Madam Chair, if I may. Along with deciding who will be on the subcommittee, it also helps to decide who will be the chair for that individual subcommittee. Okay. I apologize.

Tawney Brunsch: Erin?

Erin Parker: Madame Chair, I move that we accept those five subcommittees and move on to deciding the chairs.

Sarah Vogel: I second.

Tawney Brunsch: All in favor?

Sarah Vogel: Aye.

Female Voice: Aye.

Tawney Brunsch: Hey, Gilbert. Gilbert, we just made you chair of all of them.

Gilbert Louis: Well, I'm not leaving [sounds like]. I'll just delegate.

Tawney Brunsch: Okay. So with those then, would it make sense at this point to decide who's serving on what and also designate a lead, a chair, on each subcommittee? Just volunteer for the ones you want?

Sarah Vogel: And of course, if anybody is missing, they get volun-told.

Tawney Brunsch: And upon every one.

Erin Parker: I'll be on administration and I'll chair it [cross-talking]. Great.

Tawney Brunsch: But that was food security, right?

Sarah Vogel: It's food security.

Female Voice: [Off mic] Oh, food security. I don't even know the meaning of [indiscernible]. What's that, Josiah?

Josiah Griffin: [Off mic] I was just looking for [indiscernible].

Sarah Vogel: This is Sarah. I'd like to be on credit and the one having to do with Forest Service.

Female Voice: Land Management?

Sarah Vogel: Yes.

Female Voice: [Off mic] [Inaudible] He'll chair that again, I'm sure.

Tawney Brunsch: Yes.

Female Voice: [Off mic] He will chair education.

Female Voice: [Off-mic] Youth and ed.

Tawney Brunsch: I'm pretty sure he was before.

Erin Parker: And I'll volunteer to be on the credit committee, too.

Tawney Brunsch: I will volunteer to lead the credit committee.

Erin Parker: I volunteer the chairman to chair the Land Management Committee.

Female Voice: You?

Erin Parker: No, the chairman, Mark.

Mark Wadsworth: I'm already a chair.

Erin Parker: Okay, then.

Tawney Brunsch: It was more fun when I thought he wasn't in the room. Okay, so land management --

Roselynn Yazzie: This is Roselynn. I volunteer to be on the youth and education, the land management, and the food security.

Sherry Crutcher: This is Sherry and I'd like the credit and the admin, and land management. I just said land management.

Tawney Brunsch: So you said credit and land management. And was there another one?

Sherry Crutcher: Admin, if they need it.

Tawney Brunsch: Okay.

Erin Parker: I'm floating alone right now so come on board.

Sherry Crutcher: Okay, I'll be those three and then if there's a vacancy for a chair I can help out, be the chair.

Tawney Brunsch: Great. Thank you, Sherry. I'm going to also volunteer for youth.

Angela Peter: [Off mic] How many are on admin?

Female Voice: Two.

Angela Peter: I'll be on admin.

Female Voice: Gilbert. Gilbert.

Gilbert Louis: This is Gilbert. I'll be on credit and education as well.

Sarah Vogel: Thank you. I think Carl-Martin should be on admin and I'd also like him on the land-use management because of the Forest Service. Jim Radintz, he would be on credit for sure. And it wouldn't hurt to have somebody from USDA on admin and I think they'd be good.

Female Voice: I'll take them. I'll tell Jim he's on my committee. Mark, you can come, too. It'll just be --

Mark Rose: Yeah. As a career employee, I don't volunteer my current or future boss [indiscernible], for the record. I'm sure there'll be --

Sarah Vogel: Oh, I think Mark is -- Mark would, don't you --?

Mark Wadsworth: I'm not [sounds like]. I'll be on it. I don't want to chair it.

Female Voice: So who else should chair --

Sarah Vogel: Mark, if you don't join at least one and chair it, you'll be on them all as chair.

Tawney Brunsch: Who else would be helpful on that with you?

Mark Wadsworth: How about Sherry? I thought she --

Tawney Brunsch: Will Sherry chair it then?

Sherry Crutcher: What's that? On what?

Tawney Brunsch: Land management?

Sherry Crutcher: Yeah. I said credit, admin, and land management.

Female Voice: And she will chair land management.

Sherry Crutcher: I can.

Female Voice: Okay, great.

Female Voice: [Off mic] How many on education, one, two, three, four? Okay.

Mark Wadsworth: And then these others have to do their or we put someone in.

Tawney Brunsch: Who else is on Food Security? That seems like you might need more help.

Female Voice: He's the only one.

Josiah Griffin: I also have Roselynn.

Female Voice: Roselynn's on it.

Female Voice: Yes, Roselynn.

Tawney Brunsch: Okay. Mark?

Mark Wadsworth: Yeah. I'll be there.

Angela Peter: And I'll [indiscernible].

Sarah Vogel: For a little while.

Mark Wadsworth: I know Maggie Goode would be helpful in some of these areas but I need to [indiscernible].

Tawney Brunsch: That is true.

Mark Wadsworth: Maggie Goode. She's the one that had a prior.

Tawney Brunsch: I think, we have a couple on each committee, don't we?

Mark Wadsworth: How many committees do we have?

Tawney Brunsch: We ended up with five. That would be credit, land management, youth/education, food security, and administration.

Mark Wadsworth: I don't know how many you are on Mark, but hopefully, NRCS with land.

Mark Rose: Yeah. I think, I don't know what committees he's on. Land management is probably one, anything to do with [inaudible].

Tawney Brunsch: Management and food security maybe.

Sherry Crutcher: We'll know each other's phone number by heart.

Mark Rose: See, I'm representing the chief here, so I'll remember that. I got a meeting with him on Monday.

Sherry Crutcher: Okay. Then give me his phone number.

Sarah Vogel: Would Carl-Martin be a good person to be on admin too?

Erin Parker: We put him on there.

Sarah Vogel: Oh, yes. Okay.

Erin Parker: You put him on everything. [Cross-talking]

Sherry Crutcher: Volun-told, I love that word now.

Sarah Vogel: I learned about it the hard way.

Female Voice: [Off-mic] We just have Jerry on youth and education right now. Don't you guys want to [indiscernible] on another one?

Tawney Brunsch: Land? That's what I was wondering, too, if land management would be [inaudible].

Sherry Crutcher: So land management would be myself, Mark, and Jerry?

Mark Wadsworth: Mark, two Marks.

Sherry Crutcher: Two Marks, okay. And Rose.

Mark Wadsworth: Have you ever heard a hare-lipped dog bark? It goes mark, mark.

Female Voice: [Off-mic] Sarah Vogel, you're also on land management.

Sarah Vogel: What?

Female Voice: You're also on land management.

Female Voice: You said credit and land management first.

Sarah Vogel: Right. Yes, I think those are two good ones.

Female Voice: You'll give us the list.

Female Voice: Yes.

Josiah Griffin: Would it be helpful for the council to have all of the subcommittees with all of the new members read out so that we have a confirmation of who's where?

Mark Wadsworth: Tawney?

Tawney Brunsch: And Sedelta can correct me when I'm wrong, I guess.

Angela Peter: Can I add to that? Can we put this on our webpage?

Sherry Crutcher: And we could just take a picture of it with our phone.

Female Voice: Right. [Cross-talking]

Sarah Vogel: I know we're in a middle of this, wrapping this up. And there's one other issue I would like to talk about for sure before 2:00. I have an idea [cross-talking].

While Josiah is doing that, could we take like say up to a few minutes to talk about another topic, which I think is an overarching importance, which is the availability of the Technical Assistance Network for the long term? It appears that there's a difference of views right now between perhaps the Office of the General Counsel, yet they did it for five years beforehand. That was under the auspices of Janie Hipp, who's pretty sharp, and all that stuff with the secretary.

I don't know the deal, but assuming that it is still possible to get a five-year commitment, I think our council could make a very strong statement in favor of that five-year commitment so that the IAC or whomever has that longevity that

is necessary to build up the expertise. And Erin has done a resolution. So take it away, Erin.

Erin Parker: Mr. Chair, kindly recognize.

Mark Wadsworth: Yes, Erin.

Erin Parker: And just forgive me, I wrote this on like whereas, whereas, whereas, now be it, therefore resolved style because that's what I default to, but I can change that to make it less lawyer-like. This is a lot of words. I'm just going to read it into the record. I'm just going to read it like it's not a whereas. I'm sorry. This is ridiculous. I'm sorry.

"The Council of Native American Farming and Ranching was created to advise the Secretary of Agriculture on ways to eliminate barriers to participation for Native American farmers and ranchers in USDA programs. This council was created as part of a programmatic relief effort undertaken to remedy 22 years of discrimination against Native American farmers and ranchers in USDA programs. The same programmatic relief called for the creation of an Indian Agriculture Technical Assistance Network.

That network is currently operating and is supported in Indian country agriculture for the past six years by providing the kind of critical on-the-ground expertise that enables Native producers especially beginning farmers and ranchers to thrive. The network has also worked to improve relationships between individual Native producers in USDA and helped these producers

access increased USDA programming. In this capacity, the network employees have often been the first to hear of and subsequently report ongoing discrimination issues to this council and to the secretary. Remedial efforts cannot be made without the council's knowledge of these issues.

While in previous years, the network has operated on funds arising from a multi-year commitment with the USDA, at present, the network has only received a one-year agreement, extending current funds through fiscal year 2017. Because of this budgetary uncertainty, the current network has been unable to expand or fill open positions, such as open positions in Alaska, leaving gaps in service to American Indian and Alaska Native producers. A multi-year agreement would resolve this uncertainty and allow the network to operate at full or possible expanded capacity, serving more Native farmers and ranchers, continuing to improve individual relationships with USDA, and encouraging more Native producers to utilize USDA programming."

This would be a recommendation that I have written. We don't have to adopt this. I just want to read it into the record. "The Council for Native American Farming and Ranching hereby recommends the Secretary of Agriculture through the Office of the General Counsel, the Office of Budget and Policy Analysis, and the Office of Tribal Relations to take immediate steps to make a multi-year financial commitment to the Indian

Agriculture Technical Assistance Network in order to enable this work to continue fulfilling the mission of remedying the past effects of discrimination. This multi-year agreement should be annual funds obligated for one year and outlaid over five years in a manner that is in accordance with the Antideficiency Act and other relevant federal appropriations and budgetary laws and regulations.

And finally, the Council on Native American Farming and Ranching, advises the secretary to have such an agreement in place before January 20, 2017." Thank you for listening to all of those words.

Female Voice: Turning it back over to you, Sarah.

Sarah Vogel: I see some good coming out of a resolution like this. I don't see anything that is negative. It may not happen, but at least we'll have tried.

Female Voice: [Inaudible]

Sarah Vogel: Well, we haven't made the motion. We've just read it. And this is actually the type of a resolution that in years past the federal officials have abstained on. So I have no issues with the federal officials abstaining.

Tawney Brunsch: Shall we wait until we have a quorum?

Female Voice: [Off mic] Sherry [inaudible]?

Leslie Wheelock: She's right out on the hall, on the phone.

Sarah Vogel: Okay, then. We can go back and discuss. I defer to you, Mark.

Mark Wadsworth: You know, just to the people that are here. On the history of -- they used to call it outreach. There was an outreach effort that was started back in 1993. And from that, I have heard I believe it was funding stretched over I think two years. And from that was the initial kind of funding that started through, you know, this effort to get the knowledge out to tribal people. I happened to be hired in that, one of those outreach positions in the original group.

It was funny back then because when I would go to a tribe and say, okay, we'd like to talk about USDA, what do you know about it? They said, aren't they the commodity program where we get our cottage [sounds like] cheese? That was really, honestly, the truth. They assumed the USDA was just a commodity program in some cases. So that outreach does work. I am in full support of still trying to have the effort to educate our people. I would just like to throw that out there that it's still from those days, we still have the ability, and things do change and it's just the amount of parity.

Leslie Wheelock: Mr. Chairman, I've only been gone from NCAI for three years, but that was pretty much what they took away from it, too. There were some conservation stuff that they looked at. There was the support for the tribal colleges and

universities. And there were the commodity and SNAP programs. And that was it. That's how I learned USDA. And that's how I met Janie Hipp. Because there was so much money in the departments, so many programs that are available and open to tribes that they weren't taking advantage of that I started with Janie's help, started the outreach at that point. Colby [phonetic] has taken over that role as I moved in to Janie's.

It's a matter of educating people coming up and coming in as to what the department is capable of doing and what resources it has. We have a new tribal guide to USDA that we're pushing to get out by the end of December to replace one that is probably ten years old by now. And we're in the final draft on it now. It's got to go through clearance and communications, typeface setting and stuff like that. But we hope that it will also help people understand more about the department and its programs.

Mark Wadsworth: And you started my memory back then that during the first original outreach efforts, it was just by agency. And actually, I think, the NRCS, FSA, and RMA were the three major funders of the outreach network and then APHIS came on board. And we had a hard time cracking that new development. Then finally that came through, you know, that was in the past [sounds like]. So it was just, I guess, to jog my memory again.

APHIS was one of the ones that myself was - them and RMA went above and beyond the part of doing research of how to work with tribes. And when we're talking about APHIS, we're talking about the scientists for the United States that I think every person in there has a D-R in front of their names. You're talking to these people, they took the time and the effort to do all the work. From that timeframe to Alan Epps, I think that the NRCS was one of the big persons [sounds like] dealing with that effort. Dave out of basically the Spokane Region was really supportive, so was the Billings area RMA people for that effort. I believe Dr. Terry Hart [phonetic] before him, there's a few liaisons that worked within APHIS in that area. But it's just amazing from when it [indiscernible] there towards nowadays.

Leslie Wheelock: We did a survey before the Tribal Nations Conference in 2015 and I'm going to forget the actual numbers. But we have well over a hundred people in the department in different agencies that have tribal liaison in their title or somewhere in their job description, which I think is probably a hundred plus more than we had five years ago, six years ago. We had Janie and we were lucky to have Janie. And we had some tribal people who were working for USDA. But it wasn't the same as the people who are given the responsibility for liaison and outreach that they have now.

Mark Wadsworth: Yes, go ahead, Sarah.

Sarah Vogel: Now that we have a quorum, and unfortunately, Leslie, you were out, I think, when Erin read a resolution. It would be basically in support of long term funding for the Technical Assistance Network.

Mark Wadsworth: This is what my [indiscernible] was alluding to, so we're not asking for individual agency report, we're asking from straight to the Department of Agriculture.

Leslie Wheelock: This is Leslie. I think what that would require is for an agency to pick up the responsibility for administering the funding via some kind of vehicle where they have multi-year funds.

Sarah Vogel: And we are hoping that this resolution might trigger that type of creativity between now and January 20th. And this is basically a Hail Mary pass. Let's hope something happens, but I would feel kind of guilty going home without trying to just express our views that a five-year long term commitment to the Technical Assistance Network is critical and we think it is. Erin did a nice resolution and I move.

Mark Wadsworth: I have a little more discussion.

Sarah Vogel: Sure. Sorry.

Mark Wadsworth: About that, too, and I think that was kind of brought up also at the council. You know, it took a lot to get OTR in the position that it is. And it actually is

underfunded also. And I don't know whether we can bring something to that inside of this resolution, just to do the Hail Mary, if you know what I mean.

Sarah Vogel: That's why you're our chairman, Mark.

Mark Wadsworth: Well, it's just an idea.

Sarah Vogel: It's a good idea.

Mark Wadsworth: Any further discussion?

Leslie Wheelock: I have a point. Excuse me, this is Leslie Wheelock, Mr. Chairman. That probably does need to be a separate resolution because what we typically run into is language at the appropriations bill that says that we are funded at not more than or not to exceed. We're under not to exceed funding, so it's not like any other agency can give us money to help run our department, our office. That's a different fix, I think, than going to an agency and saying or to and saying we have this entity that we want to establish with multi-year funding. Do you have a line item that that would fit under, some sort of outreach support, whatever. Whatever, you know, let them be creative about it.

Mark Wadsworth: So it needs to be its own separate --

Leslie Wheelock: This saves our office so much time by the way. I can sit here and write these things out and it's like, okay, what was it we were talking about.

Mark Wadsworth: I think we're getting close to the we-got-to-leave time.

Sarah Vogel: That's why I was hoping we could make that as a motion while there is a quorum.

Mark Wadsworth: There's a motion on the floor. The first one is about the Technical Assistance Network.

Sarah Vogel: Right. That we've read and it's in the record so we won't re-read it again. I so move.

Mark Wadsworth: The motion is made by Sarah Vogel. Is there a second?

Roselynn Yazzie: Second.

Mark Wadsworth: It's seconded by Roselynn Yazzie. Any further discussion? If not, all those in favor, please raise your hand. Any opposed? Wonderful.

Sherry Crutcher: Abstain. I didn't hear the call. I had to.

Mark Wadsworth: Oh, yeah. That's fair. The motion passes.

Sarah Vogel: Do you need that --

Mark Wadsworth: Need a second resolution for OTR.

Sarah Vogel: I will also make that motion which will also say --

Erin Parker: I used the first two lines again, so it's just a summary of what the council has created to do and

particularly the remedy past discrimination. I said, "This council largely depends on the continued good work of the Office of Tribal Relations inside the Office of the Secretary at the USDA and that office must be funded annually through an Appropriations Bill and cannot do its work without that appropriation. Therefore, the council recommends continued funding for the Office of Tribal Relations."

Female Voice: [Off-mic] We want to increase the prevalent budget [inaudible] --

Erin Parker: Okay. Then I will amend my statement and say, "Continued funding at the current funding level and preferably an increase commensurate with the previous increase that's worthy." I'm sorry. It's a lawyer -- a previous request.

Female Voice: [Inaudible]

Mark Wadsworth: I think you guys can type that up and give that out to us.

Female Voice: I second your --

Sarah Vogel: And if I could make a friendly amendment, I think we should ask for the increased funding, not to keep it the same.

Mark Wadsworth: Oh, yeah, with the 50 percent commensurate with the presidential budget recommendation.

Sarah Vogel: Precisely. Yes.

Mark Wadsworth: Anybody who seconds? Oh, Erin?

Erin Parker: I second.

Mark Wadsworth: All right. Any further discussion? If not, we'll go to vote. All those in favor, raise your hand. Any opposed? Any abstain?

Sherry Crutcher: I abstain again.

Mark Wadsworth: One abstain.

Sherry Crutcher: You have to submit to me so I can update myself. I had to step out.

Sarah Vogel: This was all known. You were here.

Sherry Crutcher: Was I volun-told?

Sarah Vogel: You were volun-told. Yeah.

Sherry Crutcher: Yeah. I heard part of it, then I walked out so I didn't.

Sarah Vogel: [Inaudible]

Sherry Crutcher: Okay. She said I don't need to abstain myself.

Mark Wadsworth: Okay. For the record, the abstentions by Sherry Crutcher are changed to support.

Female Voice: [Off-mic] [Inaudible] that at times, when you get to such a low quorum that if you walk out, you will take the quorum away.

Sherry Crutcher: That's why I counted it before I left. I didn't want to leave until I made sure I count it.

Sarah Vogel: And I am very sorry. I have to leave now. I made plans for tomorrow that I can't get out of and that's the only way I can get home.

Tawney Brunsch: So with that [cross-talking] -- I was just going to see -- first of all, I had discussed with Josiah just on the side here that I think as a next step then, I've kind of gotten through the recommendation matrix and just filled in what I think the subcommittee might be. But I do have question marks on some of the action items on some of the recommendations. And so, if we could, once Josiah updates the matrix, he'll send it to me. I'll fill it in and we can just email it out and you guys can tell me or we can decide then, you know, what subcommittee should be following up on the action items. Some of them are the same as they were previously, but we need to do that before we can determine next meeting dates and stuff for the subcommittee. Oh, did you want to review the list of the subcommittee?

Josiah Griffin: Yes, ma'am, if you don't mind.

Mark Wadsworth: Josiah.

Josiah Griffin: Thank you, Mr. Chair. So going down the list for the Land Management Subcommittee, we have Sherry Crutcher as the primary lead. We have underneath that subcommittee or staffing that subcommittee, excuse me, we have Sarah Vogel, Jerry McPeak, Mark Wadsworth, Sherry Crutcher, the

Office of Civil Rights, Natural Resources Conservation Services, and Roselynn Yazzie. Does everyone who is in attendance feel comfortable with that list? I'm seeing [cross-talking] -- yes, sir. Natural Resources Conservation Service here.

So going to the next, the Credit and Credit Desert Subcommittee, we have Tawney Brunsch as the lead. We have within that Subcommittee Erin Parker, Sarah Vogel, Tawney Brunsch, Sherry Crutcher, Gilbert Louis III, and the Farm Service Agency Representatives.

For Youth and Education, we have Jerry McPeak as the volunteered lead, where we have Erin Parker, Jerry McPeak, Tawney Brunsch, Gilbert Louis III, and Roselynn Yazzie.

Erin Parker: I'm not on the youth one, sorry.

Josiah Griffin: Okay. I apologize.

Erin Parker: That's okay.

Tawney Brunsch: Are you not? You were just on my list. You should be on that.

Erin Parker: Did I get volun-told? No, I am not, I'm already on the --

Josiah Griffin: So we have redacted Erin Parker from the list.

Sarah Vogel: She should be on it.

Erin Parker: Okay. I've been volun-told.

Sarah Vogel: Really. I think because of the Summer Youth Institute and the pipeline of ideas from somebody who is going to be [cross-talking] --

Erin Parker: All right. I accept. I acquiesce. I listen to my elders. They know what to do. Yes, ma'am. Okay.

Josiah Griffin: We have Erin Parker back on for the Youth and Education subcommittee.

Moving on to the Food Security Subcommittee, we have Angela Peter as the lead. Within that subcommittee, we have Angela Peter, Mark Wadsworth, Roselynn Yazzie, and the Natural Resources Conservation Service. Does everyone feel amenable to that listing? I'm seeing nods.

I'm moving on to the final subcommittee of Administration. We have Erin Parker as the lead with Angela Peter, Erin Parker, Sherry Crutcher, the Office of Civil Rights, and the Farm Service Agency. Does anyone have any objections or amendments to this listing?

Sarah Vogel: I have a question. I wonder if the chairman maybe should be on the Administration Committee. I meant Mark.

Mark Wadsworth: Yeah. I was out on the admin portion of it. What was the purpose of the committee?

Sarah Vogel: It would be all the different things like --

Erin Parker: It's a lot of programmatic looking at like the inner workings of USDA and trying to find process improvements, programmatic efforts inside, inter-agency.

Mark Wadsworth: Yeah. I'll agree. And I had to ask another question on the Food Security. What was the gist or what goes with that one?

Sarah Vogel: It would include subsistence. It includes the food programs, the cheese [sounds like], and it would be diversification -- or the heirloom crops. Angela?

Female Voice: It's your committee.

Angela Peter: Oh, sorry. They got me to check it out.

Sarah Vogel: What's your committee about?

Mark Wadsworth: The Food Security.

Angela Peter: Food, it's about food. I guess we can look at different areas. I know we talk about subsistence, but I think subsistence in all throughout Indian Country. You have to find ways to fish in order for your family to survive. And so, subsistence would mean, you know in that form. What else?

Male Voice: Would the Food Safety Act be part of that committee as well?

Angela Peter: Food Safety Act?

Sarah Vogel: Food Security is what your title is.

Angela Peter: Yeah.

Sherry Crutcher: But is that -- excuse me, Mr. Chairman. But is that for personal use. I mean, I'm just trying to clarify it because like you said you guys live on salmon and moose. So what is this for? The commodities? Or what's the angle we're pointing in for Food Security?

Angela Peter: Well, I just had the input from you guys. I don't have anybody else to view or anywhere else. I have the view from Alaska.

Sherry Crutcher: And like mine. We live off deer, rabbits, sage hens, groundhogs, you know. Those are our foods, our Native foods that I have to make sure that I'm going to put in my freezer for the winter. So I kind of know where you're coming from as far as that. That's why my question is, is it for like the commodity portion of it or is it for the moose and the salmon preserve? You know, we're talking about the Food Security somewhat. Okay?

Angela Peter: [Off-mic] Yeah. Well, it wouldn't be left for commodity [indiscernible]. The entire lifecycle for Alaska is every season, it moves. My tribe moves to a different area based on what was there, but they have a main home. But I would see it as being able to feed the family. That's what I'm going to do. It is not that everybody ends up, you know, [indiscernible].

Sarah Vogel: There is also a discussion I think about including the SNAP and the Food program so that it's healthier, so people could be healthier too. I thought that was going to be part of that committee. And that's why Leslie wanted to be on it in particular, I think.

Sherry Crutcher: But healthy. I mean that is really healthy because that's pure lean. You know, that's the kind of food that we, as natives, should be going back to the land.

Angela Peter: And also we have a really big push for the gardens.

Female Voice: For the schools.

Angela Peter: The schools are --

Sherry Crutcher: Have you guys thought about the hoop houses? There's the funding there for those hoop houses.

Angela Peter: We don't call them hoop houses.

Mark Wadsworth: They call them high tunnels.

Leslie Wheelock: People in the state of Alaska are the largest utilizers of the high tunnel hoop house.

Sherry Crutcher: Perfect. Not the tunnel of love, but the tunnel of food.

Angela Peter: [Off-mic] [Indiscernible] program is that in electing the school to --

Female Voice: Farm to table?

Angela Peter: Yeah. We're working on the Farm to Table. But the only thing is that they do not let us serve any of the potatoes in the school until they took them out of the village, got them tested and everything that they had to do, and then bring them back. We take 20 to 37 pounds to send something on each way. So they're working on it, but it hasn't been done.

Sherry Crutcher: So that's the same thing that - what was his name - Zach was talking about. Taking it off the table and go poison it and bring it back.

Josiah Griffin: So if I may, Mr. Chairman, this is Josiah. Not to detract from the conversation, but there is a lot of back and forth going on with some additional voices being kind of in the mix. So for purposes of the transcript, can we just keep the introductions flowing?

Mark Wadsworth: Also, we're going to have two individuals leaving here and we will lose our quorum. What is the procedure with that? Carry on as an official meeting?

Josiah Griffin: Sir, as long as I'm counting correctly --

Leslie Wheelock: He's right. We got it. We'll have eight.

Josiah Griffin: Yes, sir. With the inclusion of Angela Peter who is walking away. We will still have a quorum.

Sherry Crutcher: Mr. Chairman, with that though, I think we've all pretty much discussed everything that we need to discuss before --

Tawney Brunsch: We still need the recommendations updated and/or decide if we're going to create a letter for Leslie to include in her transition plan.

Sherry Crutcher: So do we need a motion for that? But I think we discussed it with you guys. You guys are, from what I saw, was the main input in that. So is there anything before you leave that you guys would like to add to that? And if we can make the motion, Mr. Chairman?

Mark Wadsworth: I was always under the impression that when we went through these in the beginning of the conversation that they would be the action items that we would reiterate again in some fashion to the secretary before the January 20th whether that be a letter or through a formal recommendation --?

Tawney Brunsch: But the thing is, is that you guys will have a quorum still after Sarah and I leave to do that. But that was my understanding too, Chairman, was that we already went through the recommendations and we know which ones we want to look up or reiterate. It just needs to be made into a formal action plan.

Mark Wadsworth: I guess we need a formal action.

Sarah Vogel: This is Sarah. During prior meetings, we generally have made our recommendations. And then, the recommendations are fashioned into a letter either by one of the officers or somebody from OTR and then signed by the chairman and submitted in that. I figured that there's probably not enough time to do a competent job of that this afternoon. I think we decided which ones to keep. We have our special two resolutions on funding for the Technical Assistance and for OTR. I think if the sense of the group is that the recommendations that we're keeping be fashioned into a letter for the purpose of the transition, that would be very effective.

Mark Wadsworth: I could second if I would.

Sarah Vogel: I'll make that a motion.

Sherry Crutcher: I'll second that.

Mark Wadsworth: Any further discussion? All in favor, raise your hand. Any opposed? Any abstentions? The motion passes.

Sarah Vogel: One more thing, I think Josiah could divvy up the recommendations into the different committees.

Mark Wadsworth: I think they were already [cross-talking] with that.

Sarah Vogel: They're done. Done that.

Tawney Brunsch: We'll send it out to the group.

Mark Wadsworth: And to get back to Sherry's, too, do you think we're pretty well wrapped up or is there any --

Sherry Crutcher: I thought we covered everything that's on the agenda before the two girls left, so I don't know.

Mark Wadsworth: Who's going to make the motion?

Sherry Crutcher: Are we wrapped up or is there something else that anybody else would like to -- I'll make that motion then Mark, the motion to adjourn the meeting based on everything on the agenda being covered.

Mark Wadsworth: Any second? Gilbert? Second?

Sherry Crutcher: They're both egging me on now, you know.

Mark Wadsworth: All in favor, raise your hand.

Sherry Crutcher: They want somebody else to do it.

Mark Wadsworth: Any opposed? None opposed. No extensions. The meeting is adjourned. Thank you, sir. Thank you.

[End of file]

[End of transcript]