



# Southwest Tribal Fisheries Commission

Annual Meeting / BIA SW Regional Headquarters - ABQ, NM / April 25, 2008

**Meeting Convened at approx. 9:15 AM**

## **Membership Attendance (Tribe / Rep)**

1. Mescalero Apache Tribe	Butch Blazer (Chairman)
2. Southern Ute Tribe	Steve Whiteman (Secretary-Treasurer)
3. Jicarilla Apache Nation	Kevin Terry
4. Navajo Nation	Viola Willetto
5. Zuni Pueblo	Nelson Luna
6. Cochiti Pueblo	Kai-T Blue Sky
7. Laguna Pueblo	Alisha Antonio
8. Okay Owingeh	Christina Taylor-Godwin
9. Santa Clara Pueblo	Not present
5. Sandia Pueblo	Not present
10. Isleta Pueblo	Not present
11. Pyramid Lake Paiute Tribe	Not present
13. Picuris Pueblo	Not present
14. San Carlos Apache Tribe	Not present
15. Ute Tribe (U&O)	Not present

## **Other Attendees:**

Ray Kirgan, Mescalero Apache Tribe  
Joe Jojola, BIA SW Regional Office  
Jennifer Smith, BIA Mescalero Agency  
Norman Jojola, BIA Northern Pueblos Agency  
Frank Serna, Laguna Natural Resources Technician  
Chris Kitcheyan, FWS - NM Fish & Wildlife Cons. Office  
Pete Stine, retired FWS  
David Kitcheyan, interested citizen

## **Welcome / Opening Comments (Butch Blazer)**

Butch welcomed everyone and asked for introductions

## **Secretary / Treasurer Report (Steve Whiteman)**

### Past Minutes and Financial Status:

Steve presented the January 25<sup>th</sup> quarterly meeting minutes for approval  
Per usual procedure, the minutes were emailed out following last meeting; No edits to the minutes were requested  
Motion for approval of past minutes: Kevin Terry 2<sup>nd</sup>: Kai-T Blue Sky. Unanimous approval.  
Last reported bank account balance (from Dec 26, 2007 bank statement) was \$21,393.67  
Current balance (from most recently received statement, Mar 25 2008) is \$21,363.67, for a net decrease of \$30.  
\$30 expenditure was annual fee-payment to NM Public Regulatory Commission for State non-profit corp. status  
Steve indicated SWTFC's federal 501c3 status is a "done deal"; just waiting for official notice from IRS  
Steve also gave an update on FWS Tribal Wildlife Grant program, app period runs May 1 thru September 2, 2008  
Assistance with TWG proposals is available through FWS Tribal Liaisons and at NAFWS conference in Yakima  
Joe Early is the Tribal Liaison for the FWS Southwest Region. He can be emailed at: [joe\\_early@fws.gov](mailto:joe_early@fws.gov)

## **Executive Director Report (Mike Montoya)**

### Officer Elections

Mike explained officer election process. No new nominations were sent in, and none indicated at meeting  
Butch and Steve were previously asked about willingness to serve in positions again; both indicated yes  
Nelson motioned to close the nominations, with second from Christina; Unanimous approval

Nelson motioned to retain incumbents for additional terms; second from Kai-T  
Mike asked for vote of acclimation to retain Butch as Chairman and Steve as Sec-Treasurer; Unanimous approval  
Incumbents re-elected for 2 year terms to expire in April 2010  
Butch and Steve offered comments and appreciation on the re-appointments

#### Mt. Taylor Uranium Mining Issue

Mike discussed the issue of proposed uranium mining on Mt. Taylor (near Grants), and public comment process  
Mike strongly encourages Tribal participation and comment due to potential significant impacts to pueblos/tribes  
Traditional and cultural resources could be impacted, therefore consultation with pueblos/tribes is important  
Mike read letter from P. Stine to Cibola County Commission expressing cultural concerns about permitting mining  
Kai-T motioned for SWTFC to support the listing of Mt Taylor as a cultural property, Second by Alisha  
Kai-T believes it is a matter of health, and the tribal coalition needs to register concern on behalf of tribal people  
Butch expressed concern about SWTFC taking a position of opposition on this issue for two reasons:

- 1) the uranium mining issue does not clearly fall within the fisheries-oriented mission of SWTFC
- 2) there may be tribal support (as well as opposition) due to economic development opp. this may provide

Butch thinks we need to be careful with the letter; the *focus* should be “listen to what tribal leaders have to say”  
The letter can also express concern about environmental degradation and adequate protection of cultural resources  
Nelson believes that an SWTFC letter should **also** go to a higher level than County for more clout, **because of negative response from McKinley County Commission on protection of Zuni Bluehead Sucker habitat (State T&E, Federal candidate) vs. development/revenue interests**– e.g., State level  
Mike will draft a letter for further consideration and approval

#### Mescalero Fishing Derby

Mike gave an overview on the derby fundraiser for the MAT Inn of Mtn Gods  
Cash prizes – including a \$250K grand prize – were available for tagged-trout caught at Mescalero Lake  
An insurance company – SCA Promotions of Dallas, TX – was hired by MAT to cover derby prize money  
The company analyzes numerous variables and “plays the numbers”; prizes are awarded in a limited lottery-drawing  
For the MAT Derby: 50 tagged fish; limited to 125 participants per day; \$25 to enter; \$10K paid out in prize money  
SCA very interested in working on future derby events; contact them (or Mike Montoya) for more info  
Promotion expected again next year; however, more advertising/promotion is needed  
Mike recognized/thanked the FWS for valuable help with angler creel surveys at the Lake

#### MTFH Fish Price Increases

The feed Supplier to MTFH has been bought-out; a new price schedule has been developed with higher feed costs  
Feed cost increase will carry over to fish costs  
Higher fuel costs also necessitate increase in fish prices  
Current MTFH-to-Tribes cost is: \$2.35 per pound for both 10” fish and trophy FWS grow-out fish  
Mike is currently trying to calculate the new rate; however, the new rate will continue to be “at-cost” for tribes  
Mike expects the new rate to be approx. \$2.50 per pound, but he’s still evaluating this  
Average current commercial rate now is \$4.50 per pound, not including delivery

#### Misc. Updates

Mike is expecting State of NM Capital Outlay funds to help with critical structural rehab work needed at MTFH  
Major benefit of the project will be the prevention of water from seeping up into the hatchery buildings  
Mike introduced Kai-T to discuss plans for Indigenous Nations Environmental Youth Alliance (INEYA)  
Kai-T briefly spoke about INEYA – what/who it is, and plans for a “road trip” to the national NAFWS conference  
The national NAFWS conference is in Yakima, WA and INEYA will be giving a presentation  
INEA also to visit with several tribes on the way to Yakima, to learn about cultures and natural resource programs

#### **Chairman Report (Butch Blazer)**

##### Funding Opportunity

Butch mentioned recent federal legislation that could be extremely beneficial for tribal wildlife programs  
The legislation is “America’s Climate Security Act”, S. 2191 sponsored by Lieberman-Warner  
Tribes would receive a portion of substantial funding under Sec. 4701 - “Adaptation Fund”  
Potential funding to tribes is estimated at \$95M, to be made available thru tribal wildlife programs like FWS-TWG  
An NTEC rep has strongly encouraged NAFWS to become more involved and supportive of the legislation  
The NTEC rep will attend the NAFWS National Board meeting in Yakima to solicit NAFWS support

#### FWS News

Vacant FWS Region 2 Asst. Regional Fisheries Director position has been filled; Mike Oetker to start soon  
Butch considers this position to be a potentially strong resource for tribes, and a strong advocate for SWTFC

Butch says SWTFC-FWS MOU is nearly complete, and in FWS hands at this time (ie, w/Regional Director Tuggle)  
SW Regional Director Ben Tuggle will notify Butch when MOU is ready for final signatures  
Butch recognized and thanked Chris Kitcheyan for his assistance in preparing and processing the draft MOU  
Mike asked about possible changes to MOU from FWS; Butch has not been notified of any FWS concerns

#### Misc. Updates

Draft NAFWS conference agenda is available at this time, go to: <http://nafws.org>  
Butch will be able to attend Board meeting in Yakima, but not the conference due to schedule conflict  
Butch has been invited to a strategic planning meeting at Department of Indian Affairs in Washington  
Butch feels his participation in strategic planning is critical for tribal support; to report back at next SWTFC meeting  
Butch recently met with President Martin at NMSU, discussed changes at the University  
President has directed that the schools various Dean's work toward interfacing with community organizations, such as SWTFC

#### **NAFWS Regional Conference/Youth Practicum Update (Norman Jojola)**

Regional conference to be held in Flagstaff AZ, August 11-14, at the Radisson Hotel  
Contact Norman if interested in helping with planning and organizing; volunteer help is needed!  
The Draft agenda for the conference is still under development  
NAFWS Youth Practicum scheduled for July 13-19 at Ladder Ranch, NM  
Contact Norman for applications or with questions about Youth Practicum

#### **Update from U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (Chris Kitcheyan)**

##### MAT-NM Cutthroat Trout Agreement

Chris Kitcheyan asked Mike about status of MOU between MAT/NM on cutthroat trout  
Mike explained some changes requested by NM related to strains of cutthroat trout and arrangements with MTFH  
Requested changes have been passed on to MAT attorney; latest MOU draft will be considered by MAT Council  
SWTFC is interested simply in facilitating the production of native fish to help all tribes  
Butch is disappointed with slow progress of working with NM on an agreement, but up to MAT to decide next step  
Butch thinks there may be stronger opportunity to work with FWS toward this goal, rather than State of NM

##### Tribal Fish Stocking

FWS has started tribal trout stockings; to continue into June  
Water quality needs to be evaluated at receiving waters 1-2 days before scheduled stock, then notify Chris  
Catfish stocking to begin late April/early May; receiving tribes have already been contacted

##### Training Opportunities

*Invasive Species Control / Decontamination* workshop available to tribes  
1-day class, June 5, 2008 at ABQ office of FWS – NO TUITION COST  
Chris to provide more information to Steve; Steve to notify SWTFC members about training details  
Alan Temple to teach *Electrofishing Techniques* training is available  
June 16-20 at Columbia, MO - \$850 tuition  
Strongly encourages tribes to participate; excellent training  
Chris to provide more information to Steve; Steve to notify SWTFC members about training details

#### **Proposal: SWTFC Fundraising Fishing Stamp (Kevin Terry)**

Kevin explained (again) the approach of using a fishing permit stamp as an SWTFC fundraiser  
Jicarilla has had good service from a printer in ABQ on stamp-stickers; could be used for SWTFC stamp  
An informational card/poster can also be utilized to educate about SWTFC, generate support thru stamp purchase  
A typical and convenient stamp price would be \$1; another option would be a fancy \$5 sticker for a vehicle  
Kevin also suggested SWTFC website as a helpful tool for fundraising purposes  
Kevin estimates a \$500 investment by SWTFC would cover costs to provide 1,000 stamps for each member tribe  
Jicarilla Apache leadership has approved using stamps on Jicarilla permits to support SWTFC  
Steve said it's time for SWTFC member tribes to get approval from leaderships to support SWTFC fundraiser stamp  
Kevin said a template-resolution can be prepared and sent out to make the approval process easy  
Kevin will coordinate with Steve on preparing the template resolution and mailing to tribes

**SWTFC Fundraising Update (Viola Willetto)**

SWTFC fundraising is planned in conjunction with the NAFWS regional conference auction in August

Norman indicates no problem with joint fund-raising with NAFWS; will be incorporated in the conference agenda  
Several items have been donated and are being held at Navajo; Donations will continue to be received  
Contact Jeff Cole or Viola Willetto with any questions or suggestions regarding the fundraising

**Other Announcements**

Tribal Cheatgrass Management Workshop / June 17-18 to be held in Dulce, NM

Tribal Endangered Species Workgroup / June 3, FWS Ecological Services in ABQ

Free subscriptions to *Eddies*, a nice color fisheries magazine published by FWS, are available - contact Pete Stine

The writer/editor of *Eddies* would be interested in receiving tribal fisheries stories/news/updates

Contact Editor, Craig Springer, with story ideas; See <http://www.fws.gov/eddies/>

**Meeting adjourned at 12:00 PM**

Red Type = Edits submitted by Nelson Luna, Zuni Pueblo

**Next Meeting:**

***SWTFC Quarterly BOD Meeting – Monday, August 11<sup>th</sup> 2008, 6:00-8:00 pm***  
**(in conjunction with NAFWS Regional Conference)**

**Meeting Minutes taken by:**

Steve Whiteman, Secretary-Treasurer  
Southwest Tribal Fisheries Commission  
[swhitema@southern-ute.nsn.us](mailto:swhitema@southern-ute.nsn.us)