



United States Department of Agriculture

Natural Resources Conservation Service

# *International Programs Division Annual Report - FY 2006*



*"Serving Conservation Globally"*

***"What is man without the beasts? If all the beasts were gone, men would die from a great loneliness of spirit. For whatever happens to the beasts, soon happens to man. All things are connected."***

***- Chief Seattle 1786 - 1866***

## FOREWARD

Chief Seattle was a wise leader indeed. He knew the importance of the relationship between man and animals. He also knew that "all things are connected." Our relationship with all of our natural resources is important as we pass along our lands to the next generation.

The work we do at home in the U.S. and around the world is important for maintaining and sustaining soil and water resources. The specialists that have traveled to Afghanistan, New Zealand, the Antarctic, Canada, Mexico and other countries share information we have gathered through our 70 plus years as a conservation agency. Our international travelers have led teams in reforestation, attended meetings and conferences to share our technologies, our expertise, and also to learn new methodologies that we can implement in the United States.

International travelers make personal sacrifices as they travel to teach our international brothers and sisters better farming techniques, as they teach them about protecting their soil, and conserving their limited water resources.

NRCS is a world leader in conservation. It is with great pride that we thank all of the people who traveled and made personal and professional sacrifices to help others who truly needed NRCS help. We also thank their managers and supervisors for allowing them to travel and to benefit from the experience of working with different cultures.

NRCS is helping to make a better world by "helping people help the land."

Melvin Westbrook, Director  
International Programs Division





# OPERATION ENDURING FREEDOM



NRCS has supported the USDA initiative since 2003 to assist in reconstruction efforts to build and improve the agricultural sector in Afghanistan. NRCS has sent 18 employees, more than any other USDA agency. NRCS International Programs Division has been proud and is honored to have worked with all of the patriotic men and women of NRCS who made many sacrifices to work in Afghanistan to support Operation Enduring Freedom.



Melvin Westbrook (left), Director of International Programs Division presents a Certificate of Appreciation to Alan Wood who returned from Afghanistan in January 2006.



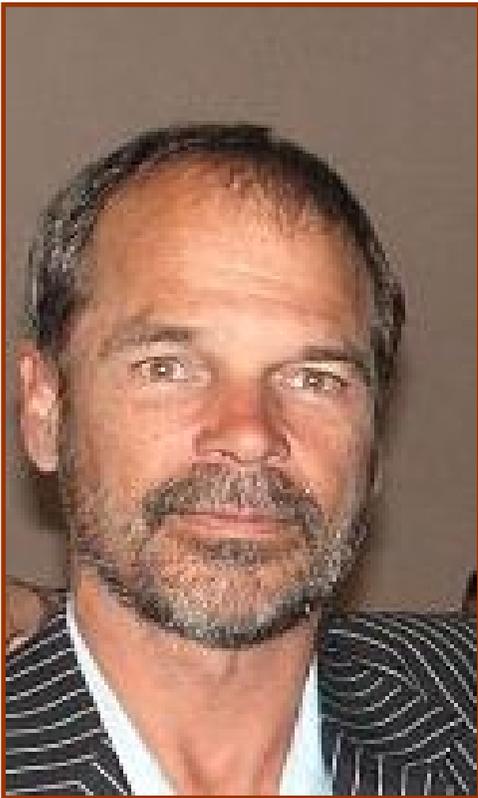
Jeff Knowles (left) receives a Certificate of Appreciation From Manuel Ayala. Jeff worked six months in Afghanistan with farmers, Afghan officials and others addressing agricultural problems.



Left to right: Otto Gonzalez and Mark Holt, FAS; Joe Carrol FAS; Alan Wood, NRCS; Orestes Vasquez, FAS; Sharon Williams, FAS, Phillipe Chabot, FAS; Jeff Knowles, NRCS. Joe, Alan, Orestes, Sharon and Jeff all spent 6 months in Afghanistan as Agricultural Advisors throughout various parts of the country.

# Jeff Knowles & Jeff Sanders Receive Commander's Award

Jeff Knowles and Jeff Sanders both spent 6 months in Afghanistan on Provincial Reconstruction Teams. They worked with the military, Non-Government Organizations and Afghan officials. Jeff Knowles was stationed in Ghazni Province and Jeff Sanders was stationed in Kandahar as the Regional Command South Agricultural Advisor.



Jeff Knowles



Jeff Sanders

The "Commander's Award for Civilian Service" is the fourth highest award that a civilian can receive from the Army and it is rare that they give such an award, especially in a war zone.

# NRCS EMPLOYEES CURRENTLY IN AFGHANISTAN



Joe Fuchthman, NE, serving in  
Gardez Province



Dr. Michael Gangwer, MI, serving in  
Parwan Province



Tony Beals, UT, serving in  
Farah Province



John Minnick and Ambassador  
Neumann. John, MD, is serving in  
Jalalabad Province.



Alex Johnson, SC, serving in Ghazni  
(this is Alex's 2<sup>nd</sup> tour in Afghanistan)

## Technical Assistance

NRCS employees travel throughout the world to provide short and long-term technical assistance. NRCS bases its assistance depending on the needs of the host country.

Afghanistan was a main focus again for NRCS in FY 2006. NRCS sent 12 specialists on short and long-term assignments to assist in training, planning, development and reconstruction efforts. They worked closely with Department of State, U.S. Agency for International Development (US/AID) and military representatives.

The following employees provided assistance or are currently serving in Afghanistan:

- **Stacy Crevello**, RC&D Coordinator, Carencro, Louisiana, returned Jan. '06
- **Alan Wood**, State Project Engineer, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, returned Dec. '05
- **Jeff Knowles**, District Conservationist, Kealkekua, Hawaii, returned Dec. '05
- **Dan Robinett**, Rangeland Management Specialist, Tucson, AZ, spent 4 months in Afghanistan
- **Nancy Young**, Forester, Little Rock, Arkansas, spent 3 months in Afghanistan
- **John Fripp**, Civil Engineer, Ft. Worth, Texas, spent 2½ weeks in Afghanistan
- **Chris Hoag**, Wetland Plant Ecologist, Aberdeen, Idaho, spent 2½ weeks in Afghanistan

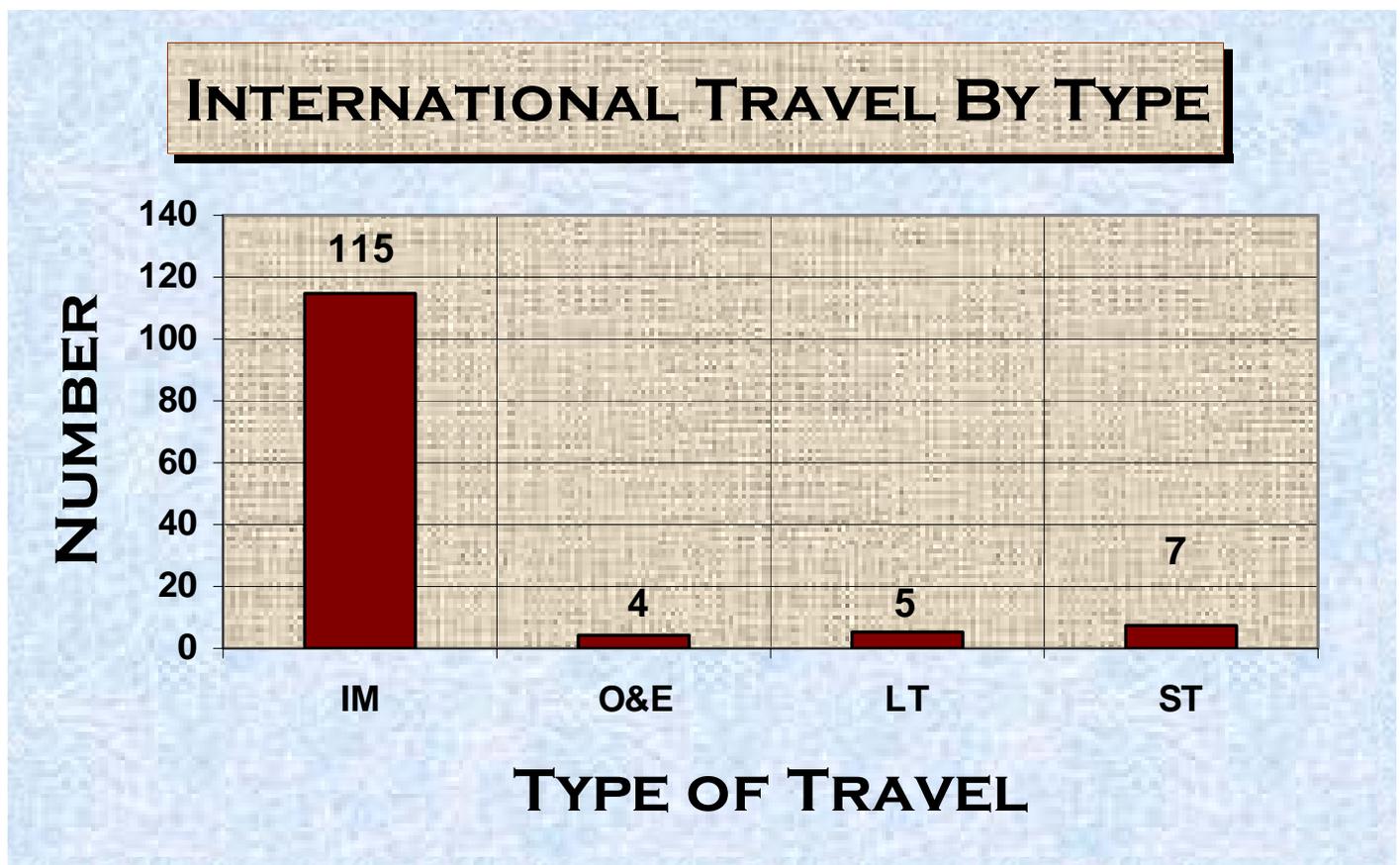
NRCS International Programs Division staff is proud to have worked with the folks who served and are serving in Afghanistan. They have made many sacrifices and they have faced many risks to improve agriculture in Afghanistan. They are truly dedicated and patriotic USDA NRCS employees.

## International Meetings

Many agency employees are members of professional societies, associations and organizations. Some of their professional meetings were held in foreign countries. One hundred fifteen NRCS employees attended international meetings for information exchange, as members of committees, or to present papers at the meetings. Participation at international meetings plays a very important role in NRCS' mission for international conservation. These meetings allow NRCS employees to inform others of our achievements in addressing natural resource concerns and how we implement innovative technologies on America's private and public lands. These meetings also provide us with the opportunity to tell conservationists from different countries why we have farm bill policies and the process by which those policies are developed.

International meetings provide forums for exchange and NRCS employees benefit by learning and sharing new ideas from our foreign hosts.

## “HELPING PEOPLE HELP THE LAND – LOCALLY & GLOBALLY”



IM - INTERNATIONAL MEETINGS  
O&E - OVERSIGHT & EVALUATION  
LT - LONG-TERM TEMPORARY DUTY  
ST - SHORT-TERM TEMPORARY DUTY

## International Meetings



Chief Bruce Knight

Deputy Chief  
Larry Clark

Chief Bruce Knight and Deputy Chief for Science and Technology Larry Clark traveled to Israel in early February to assess the potential for conservation technical assistance and technology exchanges between Israel and the U.S.

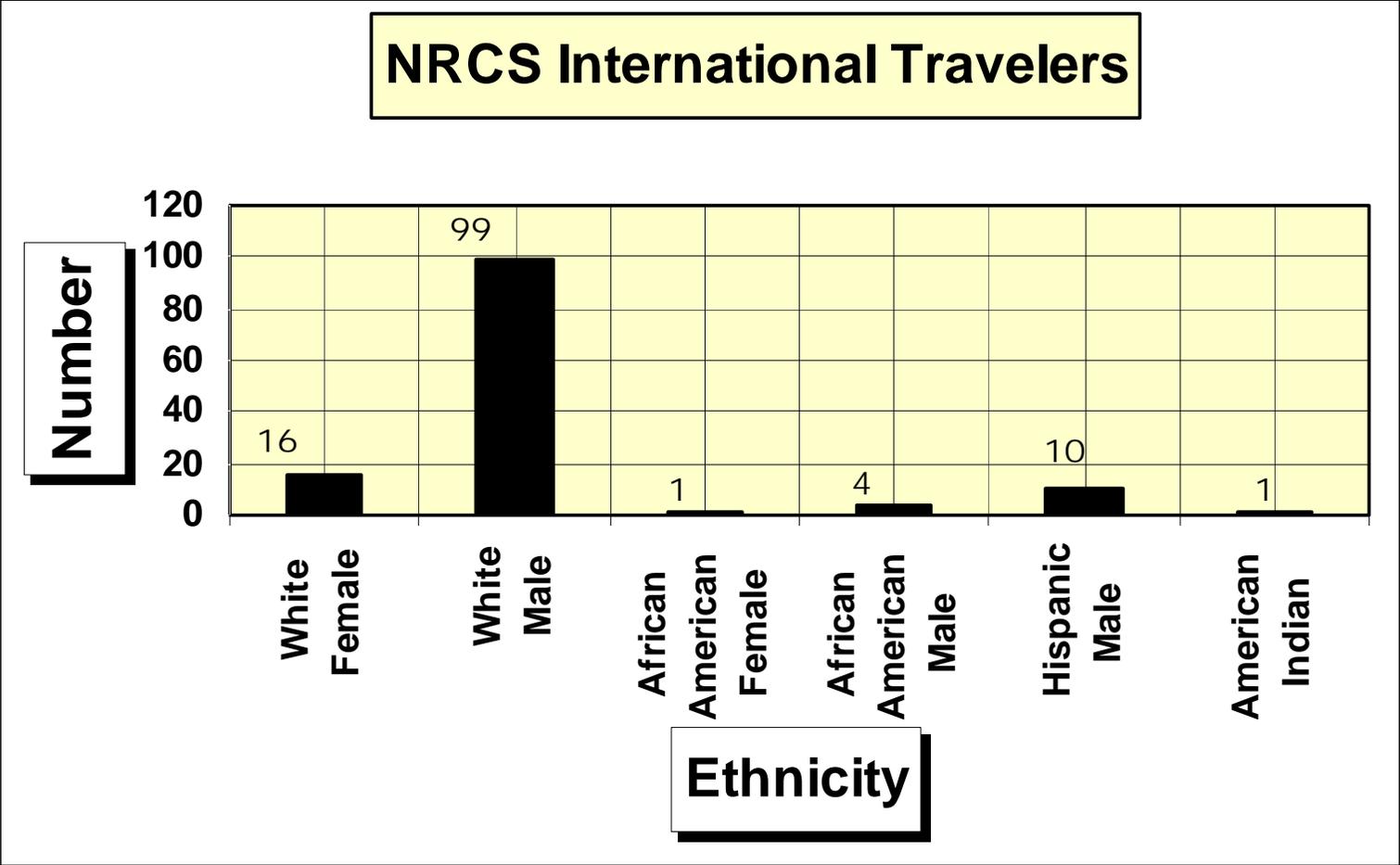
*“Helping People Help the Land”*

# INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMS DIVISION (IPD)

IPD strives to send as many women and minorities as possible on foreign assignments. IPD staff members encourage women and minorities to submit proposals for international opportunities and to let us know of their interests in international short-term and long-term assignments. IPD staff work closely with USDA-NRCS employee organizations to inform their members about IPD and international assignment possibilities.

Foreign assignment opportunities are limited and unless IPD staff knows of an employee's interest in short-term or long-term details, some employees may not be considered for an assignment.

We encourage you to contact us at: (301) 504-2271 or e-mail [ipd@wdc.usda.gov](mailto:ipd@wdc.usda.gov) if you have questions or need information. IPD staff is here to help YOU and to provide YOU with the best possible service that we can.



## Foreign Visitors

NRCS officials are often times requested to meet with agriculturalists from different countries. The visitors ask to learn about our conservation programs, tour states to view crops, forages and technologies. NRCS staff at all levels play important roles in exchanging information and establishing dialogue. Many of our NRCS people are true “ambassadors” of conservation.



Deputy Chief for Programs Tom Christensen (left) meets with a delegation from China.



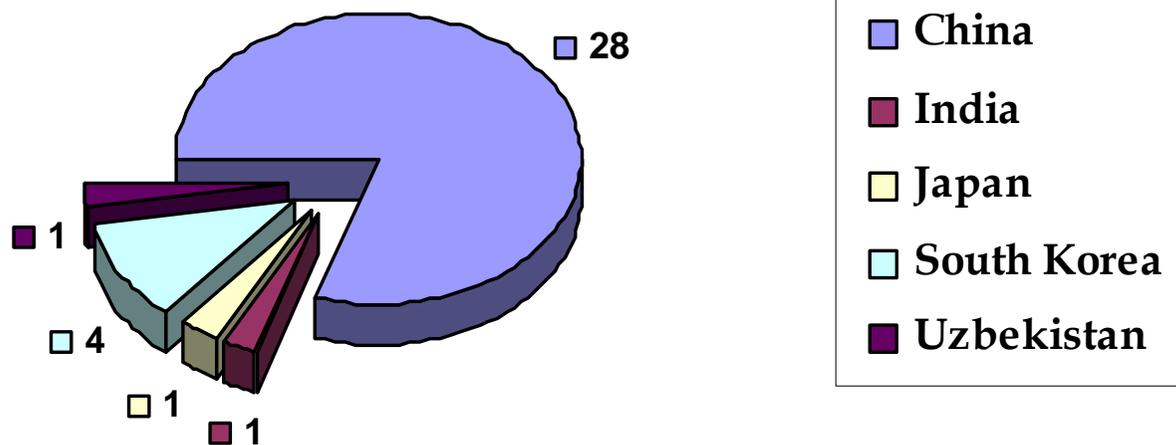
The Chinese delegation wanted to learn about NRCS programs and partnerships. The dialogue was accomplished through an interpreter.



Visitors from China listen intently as various Farm Bill programs are explained to them.

# Foreign Visitors

## Foreign Visitors in 2006



International visitors come to the U.S. to learn about conservation programs and to go to the field to observe conservation practices that have been applied. Many of the visits are individually tailored to the needs, capabilities, and desires of the visitor to provide maximum benefits. Many of the programs are developed and conducted by NRCS employees in the course of their normal on-the-job duties rather than in a classroom setting.

State Conservationists, Center Directors, Division Directors, and Deputy Chiefs all played important roles as itineraries and training were developed for our foreign guests.

## INTERNATIONAL VOLUNTEERS

New York has had the privilege of having Imad Horone from Sudan to be assisting the New York City Soil Survey team. Imad joined the team on June 12, 2006. Imad volunteered over 120 hours in FY 2006. Imad is currently an M.S. candidate in Environmental Science at the College of Staten Island, part of the City University of New York (CUNY).

We thank New York USDA-NRCS for having Imad as an International Volunteer and we thank Imad for dedicating his time to assist the Soil Survey team.



International Volunteer Imad Herone assists in conducting ground penetrating investigations to determine depth to bedrock for the Bronx River Watershed Soil Survey.

Imad found time between his studies to join the NY NRCS Soils Staff for an Adirondack mapping detail for a week in September 2006 at Camp Overlook in Mountain View, NY.



## Embassy Science Fellows Program

David Weeks, Assistant State Conservationist (Natural Resources Planning), Little Rock, Arkansas, participated in the Embassy Science Fellows Program (ESFP). David spent 30 days in Macedonia assisting with watershed assessment, information gathering, watershed planning and making recommendations to the embassy staff.

ESFP enables overseas posts to acquire high-level scientific advisory capacity on science and technology issues important to their missions. The ESFP provides agency staff with opportunities for valuable international experience, often involving participation in national and international standard-setting bodies, and provides access to platforms that influence foreign governments and public opinion on strategic topics.

The ESFP is usually advertised in the spring of the year and selections are made once the advertisement closes.

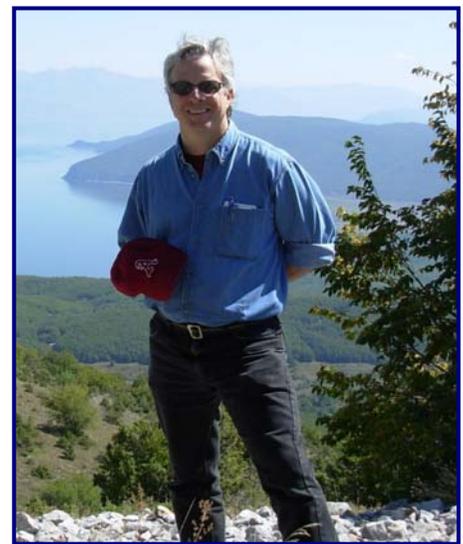


Photo by David Weeks



Photo by David Weeks

Trees getting established where sheep no longer graze very intensively



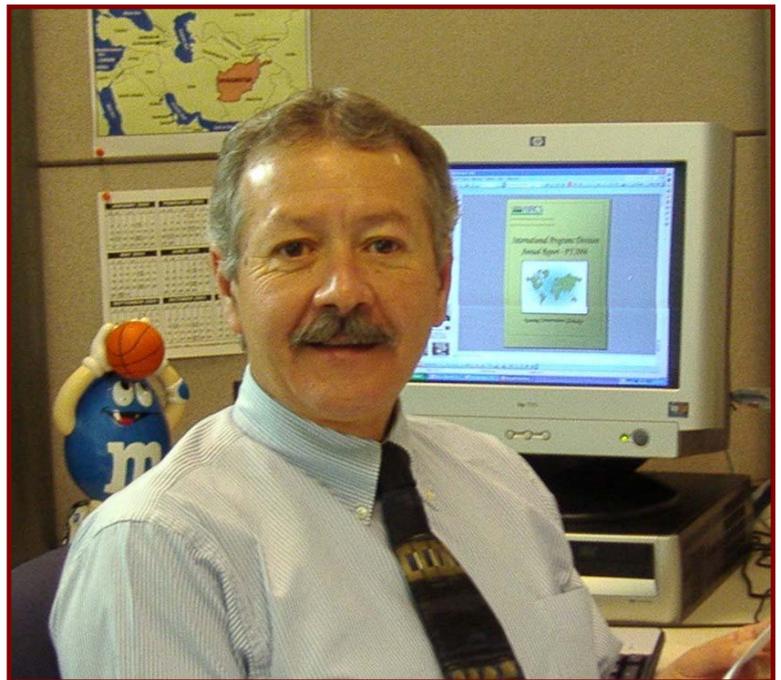
"There used to be 30,000 sheep in the 45,000 ac park. Now there are about 1000. Without sheep regularly grazing, the vegetation is changing back to trees - the way it was several hundred years ago when earlier people cleared the forests. The pastures have many unique and rare plants, some found nowhere else on earth. The park managers are trying to find ways to encourage the sheppards to keep using selected areas of the park so these unusual plant communities can continue to exist. It's an unusual case of a valuable ecological resource that owes its existence to humans."

## International Programs Division (IPD) Staff

The IPD staff helped a number of NRCS travelers this last year by informing them about travel policy, procedures, and by answering the travelers' questions. IPD staff also assisted in obtaining passports, visas and other documentation necessary for a successful trip.



Herby Bloodworth



Manuel Ayala, Jr.



Marita McCree



Jeanette "Peaches" James

***NRCS' GUIDING  
PRINCIPLES***

***SERVICE***

***PARTNERSHIPS***

***TECHNICAL  
EXCELLENCE***



United States Department of Agriculture

Natural Resources Conservation Service



“Serving Conservation Globally”

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