



Nevada Interagency Civil Rights
Advisory Committee

USDA Natural Resources
Conservation Service
and
USDA Farm Service Agency

Civil Rights are for Everyone!

Minutes of October 30, 2012 Meeting

NICRAC Website: http://www.nv.nrcs.usda.gov/about/NV_CR.html

Call to Order and Introduction

The meeting was called to order at 10:00 a.m. Chair Jarrod Edmunds took roll call.

Present in Reno:

Bill Elder, DEPM, NRCS Advisor
Kristen Chaffin, (attending for Mike Odegard, AIANP)
Bill Conlin, LGBTPM
Levi Steptoe, BSEPM

Present by teleconference:

Jarrod Edmunds, Chair
Eric Eldredge, Secretary
Ed Sturges, VEPM
Brien Park, Vice Chair

Could not attend:

Bruce Petersen, DEEOO
Clint Koble, DEEOO
Liz Warner, AAPIEP
Mike Odegard, AIANPM
Carmella Apodaca-Irwin, HSEPM
Tracey Jean Wolfe, WSEPM

Review of Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting of July 18, 2012 were reviewed and approved, as posted on the NICRAC web page at: <http://www.nv.nrcs.usda.gov/about/nicrc.html>

Program Reports

Special Emphasis Program Manager Reports

Disability – Bill Elder reported October is Disability Employment Awareness month. Bill sent out items of interest to everyone on the subject.

LGBT – Bill Conlin sent out items on LGBT History Month in October. Bill expressed thanks to Sharron Nance NRCS in Fresno for helping inform him of pertinent materials.

Veterans – Ed Sturges reported they are still working on a certificate to send out recognizing all Nevada NRCS employees who are veterans. Reid Kelly will attend a meeting tomorrow on the topic.

Black – Levi Steptoe has sent out vacancy announcements and has been in contact with other BPMs, also has a teleconference scheduled for tomorrow.

American Indian, Asian/Pacific Islander, Federal Women, Hispanic, – No report

NICRAC Officers and Advisors Reports

Chair Report – Jarrod is working on updates to the website, if anyone has changes that should be made please send them to Jonnie or Liz. Two new employees will be starting next week, Mamie Gomez and Dennis Workman.

Vice-Chair Report – Brien had nothing to report.

Secretary Report – Eric asked that attendees send a brief email of their comments following this meeting to help with compiling the minutes.

DEEOO Report NRCS – Bill E. reported Bruce Petersen received the State Civil Rights Award in recognition of his work with diversity in employment in Nevada NRCS, and for the success of Title VI Strike Force initiative, which reached many rural and historically underserved producers.

Bill also reported he is part of the National team working on revising Civil Rights program delivery, and will have Jarrod review a draft for material to include, and send it out for review in November.

DEEOO Report FSA – Dan asked about hiring veterans, he thought there was a notice sent to FSA about hiring for 6 months to 1 year and that they did not count toward FTEs. Dan wanted to know if anyone has done it, and said he will report back.

Jarrod responded that as part of Pathways veterans can be appointed non-competitively. Ed will get more information on it.

Mentoring Program – Jarrod reported four each of mentors and protégés attended training in Davis, CA. A report was sent that gives the numbers from each state. Nevada's participation is good, with many of the newer employees as protégés. The mentoring program was made mandatory for new supervisors by an update to the General Manual effective FY13.

Old Business

NICRAC 2012 Business Plan – Jarrod will send it out for everyone to update their activities for the last quarter.

NICRAC Nevada Bulletins will be sent out, along with policy updates. Bill E. said he will send out a memo advising us of changes.

Strike Force – Bill E. reported 11 meetings, including recent and upcoming, and an email requesting states to provide information to the Secretary of Agriculture's office. Drought disaster relief sign-ups for Nevada totaled 350,000 acres for WHIP and EQIP, 150,000 acres of which were for historically underserved producers.

In CY12 the Food and Agriculture Council chair position for Nevada was held by Rural Development, and that responsibility rotates to NRCS in CY13.

Web Update – Jarrod asked the Committee to look at the website and send any changes to Liz or Jonnie. The national roster of SEPMs for Nevada can be updated by Sharon OAO after the first of the year when the expired terms and vacancies are filled.

New NICRAC Officers and Advisors - Jarrod said he would advertise the SEPM openings on the committee to seek volunteers for the positions.

Position vacancies and recently filled positions – Three positions in Nevada NRCS have recently been filled, and the D.C. position for Winnemucca will be re-advertised.

Bi-annual Civil Rights Report – Bill said these reports are filed in February and July.

Outreach Documentation – Jarrod reported that he, Brien, and Liz have developed a form that can be completed and sent to Liz whenever outreach is done.

New Business

Terms to expire/extend: AIANP, AAPIEP, DEP, HEP, vacancy: NRCS Advisor – Bill E. suggested the Chair and the Secretary send out an announcement in mid-November to fill the five vacancies.

FY13 Budget – The Chair and Secretary will prepare a revised budget, which will be less. Jarrod will work with Jill to allocate 64T hours for the SEPM and Officer positions. ([Update 11/2/12, fund code 01T or 02T will be used](#)). Training, if offered, will likely be online, and meetings will probably be by teleconference, as there will be no travel budget.

FY13 Business Plan – will be reviewed and revised as needed.

Pathways Program requirements and Upcoming Career Fairs/Recruitment – Internship positions will need to be advertised on USA Jobs. Any career fairs will need to be advertised in advance on USA Jobs if any specific position is being offered or if any resumes are collected. The new Veterans Hiring Authority is also part of Pathways procedure.

New USDA Nondiscrimination Statement – is required on all publications if there is room for it. On certain items such as posters or brochures, the short version may be used.

Hispanic and Women Farmer & Rancher Claims period from 9/24/12 – 3/25/13 has been advertised, and a poster was sent out that is prominently displayed in all offices.

Outreach Documentation – After November, we will have transitioned to electronic 230 File Folders on the Nevada NRCS SharePoint Site. The CR compliance review, which is conducted every 5 years, may be done electronically. Every office will have a folder, and those are being set up during November. Each office should scan and archive their paper files, and scan filled paper forms or save fillable e-forms to their folder.

Open Comment:

Discussion of the 4 SEPM terms expiring in December, plus another vacancy due to relocation to Texas. The NRCS advisor vacancy will be filled by the new SAO.

Meeting Adjourned:

10:48 Adjourn – The next quarterly NICRAC meeting is Tuesday, January 15, 2013.

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