



**Nevada Interagency
Civil Rights Advisory
Committee**

**USDA Natural Resources
Conservation Service**

and

USDA Farm Service Agency

Civil Rights are for Everyone!

Minutes of January 18, 2012 Meeting

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

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I. Call to Order and Introduction

The meeting began at 10:00 a.m. Chair Jarrod Edmunds took roll call.

Present, by teleconference:

Reno

Bruce Petersen, DEEOO, State Conservationist

Brien Park, Vice-Chair

Mike Odegard, AIANEPM

Liz Warner, AAPIEPM

Levi Steptoe, BEPM

Cassie Storms, NRCS Advisor

Las Vegas

Jarrod Edmunds, Chair

Teri Knight, LGBTPM

Ely

Bill Elder, NRCS Advisor/DEPM

Eric Eldredge, Secretary

Ed Sturges, VEPM

Could not attend:

Clint Koble, DEEOO, Director, Farm Service Agency

Dan Rybicki, FSA Advisor

Carmella Apodaca Irwin, HEPM

Tracey Jean Wolfe, FWPM

II. Review of Minutes

The Minutes of October 11, 2011 were reviewed and approved.

The Chair (Jarrod) congratulated Teri Knight as the recipient of the National Civil Rights Award, and thanked her for her efforts and the recognition this award will bring to Nevada.

Jarrod also asked that Cassie Storms be listed as an Advisor on the NICRAC flyer and web page in lieu of a representative from Human Resources.

III. Program Reports

1. **Special Emphasis Program reports:**

Black Program: Levi sent out many job announcements, and also sent out information on Black History Month, which is February, and a poster contest for Black History Month.

Asian American /Pacific Islander Program: Liz, January 23 begins Chinese New Year. She is working on the next edition of the Asian Pacific Islander newsletter.

American Indian/Alaskan Native Program: Mike, no report. Jarrod mentioned that American Indian Harmony posters were collected at the State Office.

Hispanic: Carmella, no report.

Disability: Bill reported that there was a national conference call on hiring people with disabilities. Nevada is above average, but now there is a hiring freeze.

Federal Women's Program: Tracey Jean, no report.

Lesbian/Gay/Bisexual/Transgender: Teri reported that she participated in the quarterly national teleconference, and reporting to National.

Veterans –Ed reported a teleconference with SEPMS, and is working on sending out a letter to veterans in NRCS, including retirees and transfers. There is a regional meeting planned for April or May, to be held at a central location for 3 or 4 states. Ed will notify Jarrod as soon as he knows and it will be passed on to others. Jarrod noted travel is limited by the budget.

2. **Chair:** Jarrod reported that the Partnership Responsibilities (Civil Rights Compliance in Program Delivery) bulletin will be released soon, and will include the annual review of the “And Justice for All” poster with our partners. The Civil Rights Compliance Review Guide was recently updated and emailed to the NICRAC. He also reminded us that February is Black History Month.

3. **Vice-Chair:** Brien, no report.

4. **Secretary:** Eric will send the minutes of this meeting for review next Monday, 23 January.

5. **Web Update:** Liz asked that we let her know of any changes needed to the website.
6. **Career Fair Update:** Jarrod and Teri attended the Career Fair in Las Vegas. Bill said UNR CABNR will have their Career Fair on Tuesday, January 31, 10 am to 3 pm at the Joe Crawley Center. We will be looking for students as summer help for the State Office and the PMC, and also science and engineering students.

IV. **Old Business from last meeting**

Bylaw changes: The revised bylaws should be reviewed and signed, if they are acceptable to the DEEO Officers of NRCS and FSA, and posted to the website. Cassie said she would present it for signatures next week.

Jarrod said the 2012 NRCRAC Business Plan is posted on SharePoint, and anyone can update it. We need to report our activities at least quarterly, so that we don't have to compile all the information at the end of the year.

Jarrod will send out annual Nevada Bulletins for Partnership Responsibilities and the "And Justice for All" poster review, and another bulletin will be prepared for the outreach section.

Liz and Jonnie were thanked for their work revising and posting the flyer.

Bill reported that in mid-December a letter was sent to the Civil Rights Division on national review, we were in compliance with ADA for office access. The current rules are used for the leases, GSA is the first line on compliance, but rules may change during the course of the lease.

The quarterly Civil Rights review for the Chief has changed to biennial, reports have been posted to SharePoint, and the 2012 is due February 6.

V. **New Business**

Bruce appointed Brien Park Vice-Chair. Liz asked if there were other applicants, Jarrod said there was one, who may have a chance at a future appointment. Jarrod said Bruce notified the other applicant about not being selected.

Jarrod reported there is no budget for face-to-face meetings for 2012, so meetings will be by teleconference. Travel for training is in the budget, and a meeting can be added if the DEEO determines it is necessary. Jarrod asked that Eric make sure the small conference room and teleconference line are reserved for all of our meetings this year. (They are; on SharePoint.)

Jarrod led discussion of a "Strike Force" to work on outreach to develop a strategic plan for minority producers below poverty line. The State Office may not know of all activities in this area. Jarrod asked if a Bulletin should be written requiring D.C.s to report outreach information to the S.O. It was suggested that a form to fill out might get better response, and Brien pointed out that if the information is going into the file as it should, it should be easy to fill out a form. Bill said File 3 of the Red Folder should have the outreach information, and we could request a

report from Public Affairs and get the information quarterly or biennially. Sometimes the information is requested with a short deadline. Cassie suggested using the Outlook Calendar, and Bill pointed out that it is on the performance plan to document outreach activities. Liz said that a form would help ensure all needed information was captured, and Jarrod asked that Liz and Brien develop a form and send it out for review.

Liz said the Strike Force plan was developed and submitted for review and is on the leadership SharePoint. There were three Tribal meetings on reservations, and three meetings with Bruce, Clint and Sarah at non-tribal locations. The Hispanic women claims process outreach plan was submitted in September.

Recent meetings included an Intertribal conference, Indian Conservation Alliance, Cattlemen's and Cattlewomen's meetings, Weed Association, and Farm Bureau. Also Secretary Vilsack was in Las Vegas recently for a roundtable meeting with minority business owners. NRCS will have an exhibit at a Rocky Mtn. Elk Foundation meeting.

Jarrod said there is a National Association of Conservation Districts meeting in Las Vegas in January and no national display booth is planned.

Liz asked if Civil Rights Award winners were submitted to overall USDA competition, Jarrod will follow up on that.

VI. Set Meeting Date and Location

Next Meeting: Wednesday, April 18, 2012, at 10:00 a.m.

Meeting Minutes and conference call number and pass code will be posted on the Nevada NRCS SharePoint site.

Meeting Adjourned at 10:53 a.m.