

# **ND Civil Rights Meeting Minutes**



**Bismarck, North Dakota  
Comfort Inn  
December 6th & 7th 2007**

**8:00am December 6<sup>th</sup> 2007 Comfort Inn  
Civil Rights Committee Members Attending:**

<b>Susan Samson Liebig</b>	<b>Chairperson</b>
<b>Paul Bjorg</b>	<b>Vice -Chairperson</b>
<b>Sheryl Smith</b>	<b>Secretary</b>
<b>Keith Weston</b>	
<b>Penny Doty</b>	
<b>Austin Lang</b>	
<b>DeAnn Young</b>	
<b>Robbie Obach</b>	
<b>Tanya Riehl</b>	<b>American Indian Emphasis Program Manager</b>
<b>Pam Schell</b>	<b>Federal Women's Program Manager</b>
<b>Lisa Lund</b>	<b>Asian/Pacific Islander Emphasis Program Manager</b>
<b>Christopher Davis</b>	<b>Black Emphasis Program Manager</b>
<b>Manuel Matos</b>	<b>Hispanic Emphasis Program Manager</b>
<b>Jack Russell</b>	<b>CR Liaison Officer for Program Delivery</b>

**Others Attending: Kristi Laframboise**

**Meeting was called to order at 8:00am by Susan Samson Liebig...Chairperson**

**Jack Russell CR Liaison Officer Report...**

Each Field Office scheduled for a QAR in 2008 will receive a 230 Civil Rights Binder. DeAnn Young explained the contents of the binder and what should be filed in it. Field Offices are not required to use the binder. New members had the opportunity to look at the binder and ask questions on its use.

The Civil Rights checklist has been reviewed and updated.

New members are encouraged to help with one Civil Rights Office Review. The Civil Rights QAR Review should be done prior to the scheduled review. Please contact the person in charge of the office review to let them know that you are doing the Civil Rights part of the review. Jack will be sending out the QAR schedule dates soon.

Each office should update their producer list by March. The ND Census may call your office for information to update their files, but we may be able to use their data as well.

Tanya Riehl will continue to update the Civil Rights Website.

### **Paul King CR Liaison Officer for Employment Report...**

We have no budget, therefore everything is rather quiet. We have not been hiring any new people. The District Conservationist positions in Bowman and Beulah Field Offices will be advertised in the future.

A handout was passed out by Manuel on a quarterly Special Emphasis Report and discussed.

### **Old Business**

The committee reviewed the Plan of Operations and DeAnn Young made a motion to approve the September minutes and Keith Weston seconded that motion.

The Action Register was reviewed. Changes and updates were made.

Civil Rights training was discussed for all new Civil Rights Members. Lisa Lund and Tanya Riehl need that training also.

Robbie Obach reported on the Mentoring Program. The program is going well with many positive comments and feedback from employees across the state. The Mentoring Program has a new website which has the program goals, mentor list, forms, and program information on it.

### **JR Flores-North Dakota State Conservationist Report...**

The agency hasn't received our budget allocation. The Civil Rights Committee and Special Emphasis Program Managers presented JR with their 2008 budgets. The budgets were reviewed and tentatively approved. JR. gave an award to Kristi Laframboise and thanked her for her leadership and advice during her tenure as State Federal Women's Program Manager and welcomed Pam Schell as the new State Federal Women's Program Manager.

### **Mike Knutson-Marketing Committee Report**

Refer to the Marketing Website for marketing information.

Meeting dates, photo contest winners and contest rules are found on the website.

Many photos are received for the contest, although many photos are poor quality.

JR Flores picks the winning photo for each month.

There are plans to make more soil tunnels for educational purposes

The 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary for Earth Day is April 22<sup>nd</sup> 2008 and the North Dakota Marketing Committee wants to make it well known across the state.

Information on meetings, Ag nights, trainings, and tours should be sent to Arlene.

**New Business**

1. Review Civil Rights Committee Voting Procedures-Roberts Rules of Order/CRC Bylaws-tabled until March Meeting
2. Civil Rights Checklist – has been updated for the 2008 Quality Assurance Reviews
3. Budget Process – No budget has been approved North Dakota for 2008
4. Required Poster for Display – Discussed poster needed and placement of these posters for Cultural Diversity Day. Posters should be placed in an area that can be accessed easily.
5. Women Land & Legacy-Iowa Project- A handout was given out. This program is similar to our Women’s Ag Night Program.
6. March Civil Rights Meeting Date... **March 3, 2008 10:30-5:00 & March 4, 2008 7:30-9:30 at the Wingate.** Manuel & Penny will make arrangements.

**David Pfiuger-Health Coordinator Report...**

**David Pfiuger is the New North Dakota Health Coordinator.** He is very optimistic, and positive about his new role and says, “It’s all about people.” David is hoping to deliver an inspiring message that attitude and choices affect our well being.

**Civil Rights Power Point Presentation**

**Presentation was given by Sheryl Smith.**

Group discussion was about how direct the committee wants to be on partner board diversity. **Sheryl Smith, Austin Lang and Keith Weston** are working on the project.

**Planning/Discussion**

**Cultural Diversity Day** will be held in Bismarck on March 19th for all North Dakota NRCS employees. The Civil Rights committee and SEPM Program Managers will help plan and organize this annual event. The following individuals are responsible for:

<u>FOOD</u>	<u>SPEAKERS</u>	<u>LOGISTICS</u>	<u>ENTERTAINMENT/ACTIVITIES</u>
Tanya Riehl	Chris Davis	Susan Samson Liebig	Pam Schell
Manuel Matos	Karri Springer	Sheryl Smith	Austin Lang
Lisa Lund	Paul Bjorg	Keith Weston	Robbie Obach
	DeAnn Young	Brad Benson	Penny Doty

**Lisa & Tanya visited 2 hotel/restaurants in Bismarck to do some ethnic food tasting.**

The Seven Seas was chosen as the place to have Cultural Diversity Day for 2008.

**Suggested Speakers:**

Dana York, Ed Schaefer, Mike Miller, Hilde van GiJssel, and Gilbert Guerrero.

**Planning/Discussion continued...**

**Cultural Diversity Day Proposed Schedule:**

**March 19, 2008**

Opening with: **The Color Guard**

8:00-9:15 Registration

9:15-9:30 Welcome-JR Flores

9:30-10:30 Speaker

10:30-11:00 Food Power Point-Tanya Reihl

11:00-12:00 Food Tasting/Sampling

12:00-12:30 Lunch-Booth

12:30-12:45 Door Prizes

12:45-1:30 Speaker

1:30-2:15 Entertainment

2:15-2:30 Wrap-Up

**Diversity Day Special Meeting to Finalize the Activities is scheduled for:**

**January 15, 2008 @ 10:00am-2:00 pm–State Office**

This date has been approved by JR Flores as per email dated 12/10/2007

# ND Civil Rights Meeting Minutes

**Bismarck, North Dakota  
Comfort Inn  
December 7, 2007**



**8:00am December 7, 2007 Comfort Inn  
Civil Rights Committee Members Attending:**

<b>Susan Samson Liebig</b>	<b>Chairperson</b>
<b>Paul Bjorg</b>	<b>Vice -Chairperson</b>
<b>Sheryl Smith</b>	<b>Secretary</b>
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**North Dakota will host the National Civil Rights Meeting in 2008. June 17<sup>th</sup>, 18<sup>th</sup> & 19<sup>th</sup> are the dates** for the three day meeting. Medora has been the chosen place of the meeting.

The ND Civil Rights Committee and the Leadership Team will meet in Medora at the Community Center.

The Nat'l Civil Rights Committee will hold their meetings in the Cowboy Hall of Fame.

Robbie Obach is responsible for making hotel arrangements and meeting rooms. A block of rooms must be reserved by May 16<sup>th</sup>.

**Nat'l Civil Rights Meeting Committees are as follows:**

<u>Tour Book</u>	<u>Refreshments</u>	<u>Lunch Speakers</u>	<u>Bus Route/Stops</u>
Susan Samson Liebig	Manuel Matos	Penny Doty	Sheryl Smith
Christopher Davis	Susan Samson Liebig	Paul Bjorg	Keith Weston
Lisa Lund		DeAnn Young	Austin Lang
Tanya Riehl			

\*Needs to done by January

**Bus Tour Proposed Schedule**  
Leave at 9:00am -5:00pm

**Proposed Speakers for the Bus Tour**  
Sheryl Smith- Plants and Medicinal Uses

## Special Emphasis Program Managers

**Lisa Lund - Asian/Pacific Islander Emphasis Program Manager**

### ND Asian Pacific Islander Special Emphasis Program



4<sup>th</sup> Quarter Report  
10/1/07-12/31/07  
By: Lisa Lund

#### Activities:

- Worked with Justin Ly (API SEPM in CA). He will attend a recruitment fair at Cal Poly in Pomona on 10.18 and will help in distributing our ND recruitment packets and making contacts. (update: the fair was not attended by NRCS due to some conflicts so Justin will hold on to our information packets and distribute at any other opportunity or career fairs he will attend in CA)
- Mailed 10 recruitment packets (with extra brochures) to Cheryl Morton who is the AAPI SEPM in Hawaii. She will distribute as she visits schools and recruitment functions.
- Submitted FY08 budget request to include budget to attend a recruitment fair with other API SEPM's in California next spring.
- Plan to assist with the luncheon for the Native American Heritage event on Nov. 20<sup>th</sup> held at Trinity Lutheran church.
- Assisted with updating/consolidating the Civil Rights checklist used in conjunction with QAR's. (the due date for completion for FY08 was 11/16)
- Participated on AAPI conference call on 11/14. The 2008 conference will be held on Aug. 11-15 in Spokane, Washington. Also discussed, was the need to coordinate efforts across the country and participate together with recruitment fairs and research on colleges etc.
- For the planned Cultural Diversity Day in March, 2008, I volunteered to be on the "food committee". Susan, Tanya and I held discussions regarding the menu as well as did taste testing for 2 of the possible locations. (Decision was made that the Seven Seas had a better location as well as food selections!)

## **Brad Benson-Veterans Emphasis Program Manager Report**

### **ND NRCS Civil Rights Committee VEPM Quarterly Update Brad Benson Bismarck, December 6-7, 2007**

#### **Networking:**

I participated in a telephone conference call on 11-6-07 w/other DEPM/VEPM in the eastern region. The conference call was moderated by Cliff Denshire, the National DEPM; some the items discussed are listed below:

- Spent time discussing the Perspectives Conference, to be held in Bethesda Maryland on December 5-7, 2007; the day of December 4 will be used for USDA training and DEPM/VEPM training, with approximately 4 hours dedicated for each the Departmental, and DEPM/VEPM training, respectively.
- Cliff discussed a change in reporting to National HQ; quarterly reporting will be required, w/the reports tied to the MD 715/AEP;
- Cliff said he would be mailing on the Disabled Veterans Affirmative Action Program report; I have not received the report to-date;
- Discussion was held concerning the standardization of the reporting requirements for accessibility standards for facilities;
- Cliff discussed the Workforce Recruitment Program (WRP) database, which is used to capture students w/disabilities at educational institutions
- Cliff requested that the DEPM/VEPM submit histories of “success” stories

#### **Communications:**

I submitted an article on the history of Veterans Day, for the next issue of Current Developments, scheduled to be out in December.

I contacted Brendon Lausch at the Minot Airforce Base. Mr. Lausch works w/veterans discharging from the service; assisting them w/finding jobs. I was interested on how best to get information related to jobs opportunities w/in the NRCS for the veteran discharging from active duty. Mr. Lausch recommended forwarding information of job openings to him as they become available. I have questions on the workability of this approach.

Darlita Sarkilahti and Arlene Duetscher assisted me in putting together an information packet. The packet includes a discussion of the job opportunities w/in the NRCS, and also includes a veteran information guide obtained from OPM. I have contacted a representative at Minot State University (MSU) where I will mail the information packet. Once the information packet gets to this individual, they will make a decision on what department/individual at MSU should have the information. I anticipate providing this information to the university who in turn can provide it to veterans who are starting their educational studies.

**Kristi Laframboise/Pam Schell Federal Women's Report**

**Federal Women's Program  
Mangers Accomplishment Report**

**by  
Kristi Laframboise**

**First Quarterly Report  
2008 FY**

**1. Communications**

FWPM Teleconference-refer to attached minutes  
Assisted the Wyoming FWPM with the role and responsibilities of a program manager.

**2. Working with Leadership**

Developed FWPM Budget for Leadership Approval

**3. Outreach**

Sent email to employees concerning the AARP Scholarship

**4. Projects**

Worked with Civil Committee to send a card of congratulations to first NRCS female DC, Roberta J. McDermott, Yuma, AZ that is retiring this year.



## Karri Springer... Disability Emphasis Program Manager Report

North Dakota

### Disability Emphasis Program Manager Quarterly Report

December 6, 2007

By:

Karri L. Springer



#### **Communications:**

Acted as a liaison between TARGET Center, IT & individual employees

Provided information to individual employees regarding reasonable accommodations

Researched Building Accessibility & Disability Awareness

Contacted national DEPM regarding DEPM responsibilities & building accessibility

Disability Awareness Month Activities:

Emailed Disability Awareness Month information to all NRCS employees:

“Testing the Limits” video clip

NRCS Disability Awareness Poster

Farm Safety article

Presidential Proclamation of Disability Awareness Month

Completing the SF256 – Self Identification of Disability form

Emailed Board Diversity Fact Sheet national bulletin to DCs, ASTC(FO)s, SEPMs & CRC chairperson

Submitted article to Current Developments newsletter:

Celebrities with Disabilities matching activity

Distributed NRCS Awareness Month Poster and distributed recruitment materials to disability services coordinators at Bismarck colleges and contacted NDAD

Reports and Accomplishments:

Provided ND DEPM/VEPM Accomplishments CD to national DEPM for distribution to other DEPMs

Submitted year-end-accomplishments report to national DEPM & ND CRC

Submitted DEPM budget to CRC chairperson

Submitted quarterly DEPM report to CRC chairperson and national DEPM

Researched national DEPM report guidance

#### **Conferences & Teleconferences:**

Participated in Perspectives on Employment of People with Disabilities Conference, Bethesda, MD

Participated in USDA/NRCS DEPM training forum, Bethesda, MD

Participated in national DEPM teleconference

Participated in September CRC meeting

#### **Committees:**

Participant - National Civil Rights Meeting Planning Committee:

Researched & Provided Information regarding accessibility issues:

Transportation, facilities & activities

Member – Speakers for Cultural Diversity Day committee – CRC subcommittee:

Researched & Requested Feedback regarding possible Cultural Diversity Day Speakers

Member – Civil Rights Checklist Review committee – CRC subcommittee:

Participated in 3 meetings to update checklist which was provided to leadership for review

#### **Other Activities:**

Assisted set up at Native American Heritage Day program

**Tanya Riehl - American Indian Emphasis Program Manager Report**

**AI/AN SEPM Report, December 2007**

November was Native American Heritage Month, to celebrate, all Federal agencies in the Bismarck area got together and hosted a luncheon for all employees. There was an archeological speaker and a Native American dancing group from the Standing Rock Indian Reservation.

I will be attending a tribal summit in Las Vegas next week. I'm looking forward to learning about Native American producers and the problems they have implementing practices on their land.

I was given the OK from JR Flores and the State Conservationist from South Dakota to work with the SEPM from SD to coordinate a proposal for the two State Conservationists to present at the 2008 American Indian Alaska Native Conference to have the 2009 AI/AN conference hosted by "The Dakota's."

**Christopher Davis - Black Emphasis Program Manager Report**

18 January 2008

***Black Emphasis Program Manager  
Quarterly Report***

As the Black Emphasis Program Manager for North Dakota, I strive to increase the diversity of North Dakota's United States Department of Agriculture workforce. In an effort to encourage minorities to apply for job opportunities, I sent out vacancy announcements for North Dakota to USDA Liaison Officers nationwide and to the National Black Emphasis Program Manager.

I worked with other Special Emphasis Program Managers and the Civil Rights Committee on developing a budget for the Black Emphasis Program. I was able to meet some of the interns working throughout the state, of which many expressed an interest in their perspective fields. Some of these individuals said they would consider applying for jobs with the ND-NRCS upon graduating.

Christopher Davis,  
Black Emphasis Program Manager

## Manuel Matos -Hispanic Emphasis Program Manager Report

HEPM Quarterly Report  
Manuel Matos  
Civil Rights Committee Meeting  
12/5/07

### Activities and Accomplishments from October to December, FY 2008

#### ▪ Participation in the University of Puerto Rico Career Fair

- Starting FY08 I worked with a group of HEPM's across the Nation and the National HEPM at the University of Puerto Rico career fair. This year NRCS participated in different activities (see Fig. 1).
- We had the opportunity to promote the agency in the Engineering Student Association Career Day, gave a presentation to the Agricultural Sciences students and faculty and participated in the Career Fair.
- More than 120 companies and 600 recruiters were part of the career fair (see Fig. 2).



Fig. 1: PR Career Fair Team



Fig. 2: UPR, Mayaguez Career Fair  
(October 6<sup>th</sup> 2007, 11:00am)

**Manuel Matos -Hispanic Emphasis Program Manager Report continued ...**

A total of 76 candidates were interviewed (46 engineers, 1 Biologist, 28 soil conservationist, 2 soil scientist).

- o A database was developed and distributed across the nation. For FY08 this database will be the main source for recruiting STEP, SCEP and Career interns for ND NRCS.



Fig. 3: Students waiting in line to get into the Career Fair (UPR, Mayaguez) (October 6<sup>th</sup> 2007, 8:45 am)

▪ **Other Career Fairs organized by the National HEPM for FY08 and number of student interviewed.**

University	Soil Conservationist	Soil Scientist	Civil Engineers	Biologist	Other	Total Interviewed
UPR, Mayaguez	28	2	46	2	---	76
Cal Poly, Ponomo	18	1	4	2	3	28
NMSU and UTEP	18	4	22	5	8, RMS	55
Texas A & M, Kingsville	14	1	3	---	9, RMS	27

## **Manuel Matos -Hispanic Emphasis Program Manager Report continued ...**

- **HEPM Business Plan**
  - Prepared the HEPM Business Plan for FY08 and submit the plan to the State Conservationist and the National HEPM.
- **HEPM First Quarter Teleconference**
  - Topics covered
    - Civil Rights Performance Report: recruitment, outreach activities, and program delivery.
    - HEPM Business Plan.
    - HIS database update: approximate 12 students have been hired.
    - HIS Grant and support letters: This is a Grant for that Hispanic Serving Institutions. The intention of the grant is to cover \$1,600 (stipend) expenses for students. The NHEPM and HIS representatives will be requesting support letters from the states. This support will required a commitment of hiring one student under the STEP or SCEP program for next summer. The student selected will get the benefit of the stipend saving the state on providing these funds.
    - HEPM training updates:
      - The HEPM training will be before the NOPHNRCSE conference in Madison, WY.
    - Recruiting:
    - Marketing: Encourage marketing of the Hispanic program.
    - Newsletters: Encourage submitting articles for different newspapers.
- **New Hispanic hires in ND:**
  - Helped recruit 3 Hispanic candidates for the Career Intern Program and Term for. soil conservationist positions.
    - 1 Career Intern Soil Conservationist (Rugby Field Office).
    - 1 Term Soil Conservationist (Steele Field Office) (started in November 26).
    - 1 Career Intern Soil Conservationist (Center Field Office)(will start January 20<sup>th</sup>).



**North Dakota Civil Rights Committee 12/07/2007**

**Individuals in the photo from left to right are:** Christopher Davis, Manuel Matos, DeAnn Young, Sheryl Smith, Pam Schell, Susan Samson Liebig, Tanya Riehl, Lisa Lund, Austin Lang, Penny Doty, Paul Bjorg, Keith Weston, and Robbie Obach.

Civil Rights Committee Minutes Respectfully submitted by:

Sheryl B Smith  
CR Secretary