

Oklahoma Civil Rights Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes
Stillwater State Office Conference Room
May 19, 2009
10:00 a.m.

Present

David Hungerford - Chair
Cleaon Bradford – BEMP
Carrie Manley – HEPM
Joy Martin – Zone 1 Rep.
Kenneth Hitch – Zone 2 Rep.
Brandy Pietz-Jones Zone 3 Rep.
Thomas James – Zone 4 Rep.
Paul Parham - DEPM
Jasper Parker – Outreach/Civil Rights

Not Present

Melanie Oliver – NAEPM
Julie Adams – FWPM
Gilbert Guerrero – Advisor

Opening Remarks – The May meeting was called to order by David Hungerford.

Review and Approval of Minutes from February 26, 2009 meeting: The minutes were reviewed and discussed. The minutes were reviewed and discussed. David asked if everyone was using the new database to enter information for civil rights reporting and most Zones were already using database. Melanie was not present due to bootcamp being held in Oklahoma City, and Julie was in Fort Collins that week. Kenny Hitch made a motion to approve the meeting minutes be approved Carri Manley seconded to accept the minutes Motion carried.

SEPM/Zone Representative Reports: Discussed the content of the SEPM reports and zone reports. Jasper discussed that the Civil Rights Office accessibility standards were in the process of being standardized so that all agencies were held to the same standard. He also discussed that there had been 8 Farm Bill Meetings held and there were good turn outs, especially in the western half of the state. See attached reports.

Training: David went to NRCS Civil Rights & Program Delivery training in OKC, but noted that this particular training does not meet the training requirements for the committee members. Upcoming training was discussed at the HEPM meeting August 3-6 2009 in Philadelphia. David suggested that Carri send in a request to attend. David suggested that other SEPM's start working on getting approval for their annual meetings as well.

Mentorship Program Discussion: David discussed that it is time for the 6 month replies and reminded everyone of the confidentiality associated with being a mentor. David also discussed that there are now national guidelines on crossing state boundaries with the mentorship program. The committee also discussed a mentor for the 1890 scholar, Merica Xiong, and she will need a mentor to possibly attend training with her in Nashville this summer. The committee discussed possible mentors.

Old Business: Discussed where we were at on the Hosting of the National Organization of Professional Hispanic NRCS employees (NOPHNRCSE). Gilbert has met with the OKC chamber of commerce. Gilbert is working on a proposal to present this summer at the annual meeting. This would mean that if we get to host the meeting it will be in 2011, since they will decide on locations two years in advance. The question was raised to see if we needed to get Public Affairs to put together a video to be presented. It was suggested that the OKC Chamber of Commerce put together video for the proposal. David will check with Gibert to see how the package is coming together. Discussed the required posters, anti-harassment policy, and getting this information out to offices during team meetings. All three posters are available on the web.

New Business:

Chief White sent out a “A New Civil Rights ERA for USDA” which discussed 14 items that we reviewed on the changes he wishes to see, such as external reviews. All items he noted were ways to reduce the number of complaints received as well as more efficient handling of complaints. We discussed that of the 14,000 complaints previously received, 3000 remain to be processed.

New Glossaries Available: Carri stated that we have received the English Spanish dictionaries and they will be distributed in the near future.

Annual Meeting Attendance: The committee discussed the policy on attending annual meetings. It was stated that the CRAC individual is responsible for turning in a request to their supervisor for attendance.

Oklahoma Agribility: Paul brought some devises from Able Tech and informed the committee of Oklahoma Agribility which provides low interest loans on equipment to help the disabled, and discussed the Oklahoma Equipment Exchange program.

Meeting Adjourned: Kenny Hitch made a motion that the meeting be adjourned Joy Martin seconded. Motion passed, meeting adjourned.

Next Meeting will be held August 20, 2009

Civil Rights Advisory Committee

Zone II Report

For the period 2/13/2009 to 5/19/2009

Submitted by: Kenneth L Hitch

Events Held

- A series of programs were held throughout Zone II to help explain the 2008 farm bill and the programs associated with this bill. The programs were planned implemented by NRCS State office personnel, OSU Cooperative extension, Cherokee Hills RC&D, Tallgrass RC&D, and local field office staff. Meetings were held in Pryor, Nowata, and Stillwater.
- On March 3, 2009, Kenneth Hitch, Zone II Representative to the Civil Rights Advisory Council attended the OSU Career Fair at the International Trades Center on the OSU Campus. NRCS personnel manned a booth and provided information on career opportunities within NRCS. I directly spoke with 12 students ranging from freshmen to graduating seniors. Many more students visited the booth and spoke with the other personnel that were there. No sign in sheet was provided but many/most of the students left a resume for consideration.

- The **Nowata County NRCS Office** in conjunction with FSA and Nowata County Conservation District planned and implemented a information outreach meeting on March 10, 2009 for landowners in Nowata and Washington counties. The meeting began with a meal provided by the Green Country Cattlemen's Assoc. Topics on the agenda to be discussed were, 2008 Farm Bill Programs, the 2010 State Cost Share and Conservation Dollars spent in Nowata County, Farm Bill programs available through FSA, and the Caney Valey Conservation District 2010 State Cost Share Program. Guest speakers were Clay Pope and Sarah Love from OACD to discuss the carbon sequestration programs and Clay gave a legislative update of Conservation and where it stands at the State and National levels. Booth space was provided for local vendors that included: NRCS, FSA, Reid Vet Clinic, Mid-America Feeds, Feed in a Drum, Farm Credit, Arvest Bank, and the Caney Valley Conservation District. The over all attendance was 140 people.



- Dennis Ware, District Conservationist **Tahlequah Field Office** along with Jacy Murphy, Conservation District Administrative Officer and Bullit Ferris, OCC CREP Planner presented information for the second time this year to another local headstart - south in Tahlequah. Illinois Jones - Official trademark and mascot of the Cherokee County Conservation District made a spectacular appearance and was a big hit with all the youth. As part of the



**Civil Rights
Zone 4
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Reported by: Kenneth Risenhoover Poteau FO

An Outreach meeting was held on January 22nd for Ft. Coffee and Bokoshe Underserved Communities at the Choctaw Community Center in Spiro. Thirty-five (35) producers attended. The meeting was sponsored by NRCS, FSA, Choctaw Nation and Eastern Oklahoma State College.

An Outreach meeting was conducted on February 10th at the Choctaw Family Investment Center in Poteau to assist underserved and beginning farmers with Pasture Improvement. One hundred-sixty producers (160) attended. The meeting was sponsored by FSA, NRCS, Choctaw Nation and Eastern Oklahoma State College. The Poteau, Stigler, Wilburton and Sallisaw NRCS offices assisted with this meeting.

A Pest Management meeting was held on March 3rd at the Choctaw Family Investment Center in Poteau to assist EQIP and CSP producers in brush and pest management issues. Twenty-five (25) producers attended.

Reported by: Thomas James Wewoka FO

A pest Management workshop was held April 21 at the Konawa Conservation District Office. Topics of discussion were Sprayer Calibration conducted by OSU Extension Travis Hanks and the 2008 Farm Bill by NRCS. There were 15 local producers present.

A Poultry Waste Management meeting was held on April 9, 2009 to discuss the EQIP Manure Transfer Program. About 6 people were in attendance.

Civil Rights and Cooperative Working Agreement review with Seminole County Conservation District.

Participated with OSU Land Judging Contest

Reported by: Kent Swift Idabel Field Office:

3/10/09 - Mass mailing to all producers concerning Red River EQIP LEA signup

3/24/09 - Assistance provided to the McCurtain County Land Judging Contest - 40 participants

3/26/09 - Assistance provided to the McCurtain County Forestry Judging Contest - 45 participants

4/7/09 - Assistance provided to the SE Forestry Judging Contest - 80 participants

4/14/09 - Presentation made to class on NRCS programs at SOSU University - 28 participants

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Black Emphasis Program Manager (BEPM)
Report

I attended the REYAP Conference in Oklahoma City on February 24, 2009. I spoke to high school students about career opportunities with NRCS.

I attended the Langston University Career Fair on March 4, 2009. We had approximately 15-20 students stop by our booth and we received 4-5 resumes. The students were interested in pursuing a career with the Federal Government and the possibilities of starting their career with the NRCS.

I was able to conduct an Outreach Meeting in Clinton on March 19, 2009, speaking to the public about NRCS and the services we provide. Also I had Beverly Schaufele with Rural Development, Ron Wright with the OSU Extension, Larry Wright with RC&D, and Vernon Whitney with FSA to discuss their services. There were a total of 42 participants who attended the meeting.

Also I participated in the Land Judging Contest on April 14, 2009 in Clinton. We had approximately 36 students from both Clinton and Thomas High Schools. The winners of the contest were students from Thomas High School.

I participated in the Deer Creek Conservation District Outdoor Classroom on April 23, 2009. I spoke to over 300 students about native and introduced grasses here in Oklahoma.

NRCS here in Oklahoma has picked up two students from Langston University to participate in the Summer Intern Program. Malcolm Jones will be working at the Muskogee Field Office and Tiffany G. Rogers will be working at the Guthrie Field Office.

Furthermore, I spoke Robert Anderson, member of the Oklahoma Black Historical Society Research Project. He mentioned maybe having me speak at their annual Conference held in November of this year.



Hispanic Emphasis Program Manager Report
May 19, 2009

- Spanish Communicators Bulletin
 - One reply received to date

- English-Spanish Dictionary from Colorado
 - Oklahoma received over 200 copies at no cost
 - Will create a bulletin to distribute at least one copy per office

- Participated in HEPM Teleconference – May 7, 2009
 - Discussed HEPM Training and NOPHNRCSE conference
 - Announced Hispanic Heritage Theme – “Embracing the Fierce Urgency of Now”



Federal Women's Program Manager Report

Julie Adams

MAY 09

I submitted a copy of an updated business plan to the civil rights committee for their review and possible use in 2010. March was Women's History Month and I provided 8 copies of the Women's History Month Poster to Civil Rights Committee Members for their distribution and offered to print any for field offices upon request. I also placed one in the hallway next to the conference room at the State Office permanently with a write-up below describing the artist and her background. I sent out Women's History 2009 Honoree's via email to everyone in the state all month long and received positive feedback on the selected participants. This is the second annual library book check-out with many books to choose from at the State Office, in my name on the honor system from the Stillwater Public Library. For those of you that traveled to the State Office during March you may have also noticed that the hallways and some doorways were posted with green paper and write-ups about different women in the Oklahoma Women's Hall of Fame. I sent the Presidents Proclamation regarding Women's History Month to everyone, at some point too.

I attended the Women in Ag Conference, March 26th in Norman, Oklahoma. It was titled "Empowering Women to Move the World". It was well attended at the JD McCarty Center and included presentations on "How to Run a Green Business", "Rural Estate Planning", "Leadership Skills for Women", "Women, Money & Power", "Women's Health Clinic", and "Landowners and Business Liability". Ruby Withrow, a Tribal Elder and member of the Citizen Potawatomi Nation provided the luncheon prayer in her native tongue.

Zone 1 Civil Rights Report May 19, 2009

Texas County

Alan Messenger, Texas County District Conservationist, attended a planning meeting with OSU and KSU in Dodge City, Kansas to discuss resource concerns associated with the removal of crop residue in Texas County.

Guymon Field Office attended the Oklahoma Panhandle State University Career and Industry Fair on February 10, 2009. OSU and KSU are developing a decision making tool to assist producers considering entering into contracts to sell biomass to the cellulosic ethanol plant in Hugoton, Kansas.

The Texas County Conservation District and NRCS staff hosted the annual Resource Day for Texas County fourth graders on April 28th. The students worked through 6 stations with topics including soils, forestry, wildlife, groundwater, invasive plant species, and National Grasslands management. Lunch for the 260 students was prepared by the Conservation District. Seaboard Farms donated pork burgers.

Dewey County

A Complimentary Grazer for Brush Management meeting was held in Taloga, OK on February 5, 2009 with 26 people in attendance at the meeting. Guest speaker, Dr. Terry Gipson-Professor of Goat Research from Langston University, covered numerous topics that were helpful to goat producers and those interested in getting into goat production. A local goat producer had an animal present for Dr. Gipson to address and give an overview of the goat from nose to tail. Controlling invasive brush species has become a priority across Dewey County and producers are seeking additional management tools to address this growing problem. This meeting was sponsored by Dewey County Conservation District, Dewey County OSU Extension, Taloga NRCS Field Office Center and Dewey County FSA.

Grant County

Rodney Hern from Wakita spoke at the Oklahoma No-till Conference. Hern is a board member on the Grant County Conservation District, and he was honored to be chosen to speak to the large group in attendance at the meeting. He discussed ground rig sprayers and nozzles. Hern has been very influential in the beginning of no-till field days being held in Grant County. The second field day is in the planning stages at this time. District Conservationist Karla Stephens, was also in attendance at the meeting.

Woods County

The Alva NRCS, Woods County Conservation District, and OSU Extension held an outreach luncheon meeting on Prescribed Burning in Freedom on February 18th. Approximately 22 producers were in attendance. John Weir (OSU) and Corey Friend (NRCS) were the guest speakers. On April 7, 2009, The Alva

NRCS and East Woods County Conservation District along with Troy Collier (soil scientist) set up and ran the NWOSU Land Judging contest on with 40 participants. They also assisted with the Farm Bureau Farm Safety Day for Woods County on May 5, 2009 with 100 participants, and assisted with programs at Alva Public Schools providing outreach to 300 participants. The Alva NRCS and the Woods County Conservation District assisted with the Freedom Outdoor Classroom on May 7, 2009 with 50 participants.

Kay County

Newkirk Service Center held a Winter Ag Seminar in Ponca City on February 18, 2009. Speakers included Dr. Mike Dicks from OSU speaking about the ACRE program, and various other parts of the farm bill related to FSA payments. Dr. Chad Godsey from OSU and Glenn Richards with Johnson Seed, spoke about cover crops for nutrient and organic matter recycling. Noble County producer, Marty Williams, and Dr. Randy Taylor from OSU spoke about precision sensing technology. Each government agency spoke about the various programs available through their agency. There were 65 producers in attendance and response from the meeting was very positive.

Woodward County

On March 24, 2009, Woodward County Conservation District Director J.T. Winters and NRCS District Conservationist Stanley Irving gave a presentation to the Woodward Kiwanis Club. Winters explained the history and partnership of the conservation district and the Natural Resource Conservation Service. Irving provided information on the 2008 Farm Bill Programs and the services provided by NRCS. There were 20 individuals in attendance.

Logan County

The Logan County Conservation District, Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Service, Farm Service Agency and the Natural Resources Conservation Service partnered to put on an outreach program open to the public. The program gave informational and educational material about the 2008 Farm Bill. The program was conducted at the Logan County Fairgrounds on March 23, 2009, and there were approximately 30 producers present with some of the producers even coming from adjoining counties.

Oklahoma County

On March 25th 2009, an outreach program was held at the Star Spencer High School in Oklahoma County. Mr. Dwight Guy of NRCS assisted in the organizational aspects of setting up this Agricultural Career Day presentation. There were approximately 400, 9th and 10th grade students that attended the event. High School instructors brought their classrooms around to hear presentations from various USDA and state agencies. District Conservationist Rod Shaw, Dwight Guy and Soil Conservation Technician Robert Dukes, made presentations and handed out informational materials at the NRCS booth.

On March 31, 2009, an Outdoor Classroom was held at Arcadia Lake in Oklahoma City for approximately 80 fourth grade students attending Putnam City Rollingwood Elementary School. The students were divided into four different groups with four sessions lasting 40 minutes. A Forestry Session was conducted by Karla Beatty, Oklahoma Conservation Commission. Soil Scientist Jeremy Dennis, taught the students about the importance of the soil and understanding the soil profile while Soil Scientist Steve Alspach, described the limitations of our earth with the Apple demonstration. Another session was on fish identification and the kids actually got to fish. This was conducted by Randy Read and other volunteers of the Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation. Oklahoma County Conservation District Secretary Becky Inmon, and Soil Conservationist Chris Best, gave a presentation on water quality to the kids. District conservationist Rod Shaw, took photos and assisted. The outdoor classroom was a great success. The students, teachers, and parents greatly appreciated the time and effort put into the activities.

Harper County

On April 28th the Harper County Conservation District and the Buffalo NRCS Field Office held a meeting for the Harper County OSU Extension Clubs as well as the public that went over conservation gardening. Keith Owen from the Rogers County Conservation District was the speaker. He went over conservation gardening, water features in gardening, as well as backyard conservation. Information was handed out covering conservation on a community basis as well as services available from both the Harper County Conservation District and the NRCS. There were 12 in attendance.

Cimarron County

The Cimarron County Conservation District held the 2009 Outdoor Resources Day on 4/29 in the Boise City Park. Despite the windy, cool weather, 89 5th & 6th grade students, homeschoolers, and teachers participated from the Cimarron County area. Educational stations were conducted by Cheryl Cheadle, State Blue Thumb, Bristow, OK; Cherrie Brown, Boise City NRCS DC; Danny Watson, ODWC, Forgan, OK; Christina Stallings Roberson, OK Forestry Project Learning Tree, Oklahoma City; Shari Butler, Cimarron National Grasslands, Elkhart, KS; Iris Imler, CCCD Programs Coordinator. Photos by Jim Belford, Cim. Co. CD

Blaine County

Fourth grade students from Blaine County schools attended the 3rd annual Blaine County Progressive Agriculture Safety Day held April 23rd, at the Blaine County Fairgrounds. The Safety day is co-coordinated by the Blaine County Conservation District and the Blaine County OSU Extension Service and sponsored nationally by Progressive Agriculture Foundations.

There were 150 students and their sponsors in attendance. Safety sessions are conducted to teach children that they can take responsibility for their own safety. Safety sessions conducted were: Animal Safety, ATV Safety, Fire Safety, Gun Safety, Meth Awareness, Tractor Safety and Water Pollution Awareness. This day long event would not be successful without the contribution from all of the volunteers and sponsors.

On April 30, the Blaine County Conservation District co-hosted the annual Ag Appreciation Banquet. There were approximately 200 in attendance for this annual event which honors Blaine County Farmers of the Year and Hall of Fame Farmers. Jasper Parker, NRCS and Debi Carnott, OCC, Water Quality Division displayed booths with conservation practices and informational material for those in attendance. NRCS, Watonga Field Office staff in attendance were Chris Shepherd, District Conservationist and Devin Lolles, Soil Conservationist.