

TSAILE/WHEATFIELDS JOINT FARM BOARD AND WATER USER MEETING  
Sunday April 15, 2018 @10:00 AM  
WHEATFIELDS CHAPTER HOUSE, WHEATFIELDS, AZ

AGENDA

RECEIVED

MAY 25 2018

Tsaile/Wheatfields  
Chapter BY: psb

1. ORDER OF BUSINESS

- A. Meeting called to order
- B. Invocation
- C. Roll Call
- D. Recognition of guest(s) and visiting officials
- E. Review and adoption of agenda
- F. Review and adoption of last meeting minutes of March 25, 2018

II. OLD BUSINESS

NNFB 2017 goals - Below are the Program Performance Criteria (PPC and Goal Statements for all Farm Boards) The Farm Board elected officials will be assigned 1 or 2 PPC, see below.

- A. Each FB will submit 12 crop inventory reports from their respective Agriculture Land Use Permittees (ALUP).

**Goal Statement:** Each FB will submit at least 3 respective crop inventory reports quarterly in table format (3CIR x 13 FBs).

1. Crop Inventory

- B. Facilitate farm improvement/outreach activities for farmers in collaboration with tribal, state and private sectors.

**Goal Statement:** Conduct 2 agricultural educational outreach/workshops for farmers per quarter per 13 FBs.

1. Wheatfields Agriculture Projects

- A. Project Status Update

- C. Provide training and assist farmers in updating or developing a conservation plan as required by BIA and the Navajo Nation.

**Goal Statement:** With farmer participation, implement conservation training and develop 2 or more plans per quarter per FB review.

1. Training

- D. Assist with farm area improvements such as land leveling, erosion control: with funding sources such as USDA.

**Goal Statement:** With farmer participation, each FB will implement 1 improvement per quarter according to conservation plan.

- 1.

- E. Each FB member shell inventory at least 3 ALUP/Farm Permit within respective FB area.

Goal Statement: With BIA and Farmer participation, reconcile and inventory as to the status of each ALUP or Farm Permit. (3ALUP x each 13 FB member)

1.

III. NEW BUSINESS

- A. WUA Financial Report
- B. Lease Agreem
- C. Training – Fraud Prevention

IV. RECEIVING REPORTS

- A. Farm Board
- B. Water User Association

V. CONCLUSION

- A. Next Agenda Items
- B. Next Meeting
- C. Adjournment

TSAILE/WHEATFIELDS JOINT FARM BOARD AND WATER USER MEETING  
Sunday April 15, 2018 @10:00 AM  
WHEATFIELDS CHAPTER HOUSE, WHEATFIELDS, AZ

MINUTES

1. ORDER OF BUSINESS

- a. Meeting called to order  
Meeting call to order by Lorena Eldridge at 10:45
- b. Invocation  
Invocation given by Marie White
- c. Roll Call  
Farm Board: Present - Lorena Eldridge, Lucinda Davis  
Water User Associations: Present – Anelda Kedelty, Weston Carroll, Amelda Benally  
Absent – Dorthene Edison, Ophelia Begay,
- d. Recognition of guest(s) and visiting officials
- e. Review and adoption of agenda  
Agenda read by Lucinda Davis  
Motion to accept the agenda: Bennie Litson  
Second: Amelda Benally  
Votes: 9 – 0 - 1
- f. Review and adoption of last meeting minutes of March 25,2018  
Motion to accept the minutes as is: Anelda Kedelty  
Second: James Becenti  
Votes: 10 – 0 - 1

II. OLD BUSINESS

NNFB 2017 goals - Below are the Program Performance Criteria (PPC and Goal Statements for all Farm Boards) The Farm Board elected officials will be assigned 1 or 2 PPC, see below.

- A. Each FB will submit 12 crop inventory reports from their respective Agriculture Land Use Permittees (ALUP).

**Goal Statement:** Each FB will submit at least 3 respective crop inventory reports quarterly in table format (3CIR x 13 FBs).

1. Crop Inventory

Lorena explained the crop inventory and the we had a Joint Farm Board meeting which consist of all the Farm Board Members from Cornfields, Crystal, Dennehotso, Ganado, Kayenta, Many Farms, Red Lake, Red Valley, Red Willow, Rock Point, San Juan River, Tsaile/Wheatfields and Western. We are to turn in the crop inventory forms in the spring and in fall, question was asked why the forms ask for the census number, how is that used, but no one really knew. The only information we got was that this information is used by the Water Rights lawyers for water settlement. These forms ask for what you

planted, whether it is traditional crops, corn, beans, squash, cucumbers, chili, melons, cantaloupes, wheat, oats and different kinds of fruits. It even ask if there is irrigation water or do you depend on the rain, or if there is weeds in your field, if so what kind of weeds, describe it and what kind of flowers does it have. When do it appear in the fields, they also ask if you use fertilizer and what kind. Do you have Russian olives, Chinese elm, salt cedar or tamaris. What others like snakes, prairie dogs, beetles or do you get animals in the farm. All these were questions on the old form, we did come up with a new one, but the vote of the Farm Board was to use both of them and see how it works out. Maybe it can all be put together later. That was the discussion of the crop inventory forms. We did get a schedule of when the planting will be done so going by that we will be turning in the crop inventory in June, 2018.

The next item is the quarterly reports. The Navajo Nation uses Form 2 which is where this report goes.

Conservation Plan	30
Farm Outreach	13
Crop Inventory	0
Farm Improvement	1
Land Use Permits	2

This is the second quarterly report. Everyone is encouraged to work on their conservation plan, which is part of this form 2. You can ask for help from those that have already got their conservation plan done.

B. Facilitate farm improvement/outreach activities for farmers in collaboration with tribal, state and private sectors.

**Goal Statement:** Conduct 2 agricultural educational outreach/workshops for farmers per quarter per 13 FBs.

**1.** Wheatfields Agriculture Projects

A. Project Status Update

Majority of us that are here now know what is in this plan which is to revitalize the farm, and second sustainability, and reliance, these three are the main points of this proposal and this project. 70% is forage, 20% will be for vegetable and 10% will be for native food. There is 127 of us that have a land use permit. These 127 permittee are to be able to use this funding to help them restart their farm.

A survey was done to see why the farmers are not farming anymore and the results were number one was no equipment and the second was no money, majority of the community are on fixed income, so with that we purchased the equipment to help the farmers to start. Planting will be coming next.

Paul C. Begay asked if what people are saying out there was true, which was if the Farm Board plant on your field then they will take all to hay or whatever they planted and they will start taking the farm land from the farmers. Now that he is hearing otherwise he think it is a good plan. He cannot work on his farm anymore due to health, but he would like his farm planted on then he can go out there with is kids to help work out there again. He would like to someday have the kids take over the

farming. If the Farm Board plant on the farmland and after that no one works on it then the Farm Board would have every right to take the farm from the farmers.

Lorena went over the plan which has been going on for some years now. We went over this so many times trying to put a plan that will work for the farmers. Last year April 2, 2017 there was a meeting here when we went over this plan, we wanted to work with the farmers, not just to do for farmers and no input from them. We came up with six scenarios. We do have the equipment now for planting, leveling, and even irrigation and all the necessary work that need to be done in order to revitalize the farm. All these are part of the proposal. There is also training for the farmers too, and we are working Dine College Land Grant Office for the training. The training started on November 17, 2017 and to go up to June, 2018.

Scenario 1 –

Farmer - will sublease their farm to the Farm Board

WUA – Will do all the work with equipment, seeds, preparation, planting irrigation and harvest and provide training/workshop

WUA – 70%                      Farmer – 30%

Scenario 2 –

Farmer currently farming their own farm

WUA – Will help with equipment, seeds, land preparation, planting, irrigation, harvesting and workshop

WUA – 10%                      Farmer – 90%

Scenario 3 –

Farmer in involved with planning, planting, irrigation, harvest, attend workshops and fencing

WUA – Help with equipment, seeds, land preparation, planting, irrigation, harvest, and workshop

WUA – 20%                      Farmer – 80%

Scenario 4 –

Farmer involved in planning, planting, irrigating 1 to 2 times, not harvest, not attend workshop, attempt fencing

WUA – Help with Equipment, seeds, land preparation, planting, irrigation, harvest, and workshop

WUA – 40%                      Farmer – 60%

Scenario 5 –

Farmer involved in planning, planting, not irrigating, not harvesting, attending workshop or not, no fencing

WUA – help with equipment, seeds, land preparation, planting, irrigation, harvest and workshop

WUA – 60%                      Farmer – 40%

Scenario 6 –

Farmer involved in not planting, not planning, not irrigating, not harvesting, not attending workshop and no fencing

WUA – help with equipment, seeds, land preparation, planting, irrigation, harvest and workshop

WUA – 90%                      Farmer – 10%

Lorena explained that all this was approved in a Farm Board meeting motioned by Lorencita James and second by James Becenti. She also said it can be changes during a meeting again, but this is what we are working with.

Paul had a comment on the scenarios again. He is saying if a farmer got help with the equipment, but if the farmer does not get there for another year, that would be a different story, but if the farmer goes out there and start working on the farm and irrigating, then the Farm Board should not take part of the crop, the farmer will be grateful for the help, but if the farmer does not go out there then you can go get the 70%, that is his idea. He like to assistance, but he does not want the Farm Board to take part of the crop. The Farm Board/WUA bill the farmers each year even though we don't use the water that is where the Farm Board and WUA get their money and they even add 10.00 each month if you don't pay.

Frank Kedelty went back to the way farmers use to help one another. Even back then the people that had equipment use to charge for helping someone with their equipment. They use to take a bale of hay every so many bales that were baled. The fees that the farmers pay is used to replace the pipes that might have been damages or the irrigation that needs to be repaired. The Farm Board and Water Users are not taking the farmland from the farmers. If you cannot work on the farm then you can lease it to someone that is willing to work on the farm and in return they can help each other with whatever is produced.

Lorena said there are different kinds of sublease. Some don't want to let their farms go so they just want to sublease to the Farm Board and they want to have their kids work on it later on. Then some are subleased to other family members. At the Joint Farm Board meeting they talked about the Standard Operation Procedures, in there it states the cancelation. We from our area we don't want to use this procedures. Some are saying that cancelation is not good for us, they are afraid that if we cancel Land Use Permit, the Government might take the land back. We are just working with sublease and relinquishment from here.

James Becenti had a question on the Standard Operation Procedures for the irrigation water for Lower Wheatfields. He said the Project Manager is supposed to do a start up in the spring and shut down in the fall, but that is not happening. Whatever the problem is now, are we going to use the Operation & Maintenance fee to pay for that? The Water Users Association have several policies, not just the Standard Operation Procedures. There are Board Officers, Ophelia Begay President, Anelda Kedelty Vice President, Dorthene Edison secretary, Amelda Benally and Weston Carroll are members. They have By Laws and they also have personnel, Farm Manager, Equipment Operator, Accountant, Office Specialist, and Grant Writer. These personnel are to be responsible for the Standard Operation Procedures, there are also Irrigation Technicians. Where the risers and air vent, they need to be marked.

Emerson said they have not worked with the Standard Operation Procedures since they have not had irrigation technicians for a couple of years.

Lorena said some places they are paying 20.00 per acre, but we are only paying 3.00 per acre. Why do we pay the O & M? Look at your land use permit it has the in there. Emerson said the project is going really good, the only thing is the Farmers are not coming to the meetings. We offer food and advertise but they still don't attend. We are doing this for our children, we are already up in age so we want our kid to start working on the farms. We have to be active in order for this project to be revitalized. We are going to plant the whole area in Lower Wheatfields and in Upper Wheatfields we will be planting the upper side. We did the soil testing in all three Farm areas. Colorado is just getting one cut this year so that means the hay price will be high so it is very important to start planting in our area. There is leveling that need to be done and fencing need to be repaired in many areas. The outside fencing is being worked on right now.

- C. Provide training and assist farmers in updating or developing a conservation plan as required by BIA and the Navajo Nation.

**Goal Statement:** With farmer participation, implement conservation training and develop 2 or more plans per quarter per FB review.

**1.** Training

Lorena said this has already been covered, but we need to just go over the training. This is something that is probably the same as what our parents or grandparents practiced, but we are learning form Land Grant Office. We did not really work with Land Grant Office before, but since Benita Litson started working there we have been able to work with her closely. Lorena went to a training on the soil testing at Dine College and soil from her field was one of them that was there. They were shown how water is absorbed and whether it has sand in it or clay. She found out that her soil needs a lot of water. The planting will be according to the type of soil you have. We asked the Grant Writer we need to get the proposal right away so we can clean out the earth & dam in case it really rains, they can be filled. The 70% will be the hay grazer that will be planted. The hay grazer has been scheduled to be planted, there is also plans to plant some vegetable. They will be starting with Lorena's fields. We need to finish the conservation plan and that will show where the hay will be planted and where the vegetable will be planted. The hay grazer seeds is less than the alfalfa. The alfalfa takes more water and you have to really care for it so it can grow. There are two factors which is soil and water. Land Grant has blue corn now, you cannot plant blue corn, yellow corn and white corn in the same area, they will cross pollenate. They found out potatoes takes a lot of nutrients out of the ground. Russet potatoes does not take too much water also. There is a schedule out on when each farm will be planted. Attached is planting dates for hay grazer beginning April, 2018. They are starting with the lower side because it is hard to get the irrigation water to that point. Once it is planted then they will start the irrigation.

- D. Assist with farm area improvements such as land leveling, erosion control: with funding sources such as USDA.

**Goal Statement:** With farmer participation, each FB will implement 1 improvement per quarter according to conservation plan.

1. None

Outside fencing is being worked on in Lower Wheatfields right now. Part of it has been done. Some of the farm have extension in the wash so BIA has to mark where the fence should be. The new fencing is only going where the Land Use Permit line is, not the addition for livestock. Question was asked about the fencing in between, but that is the responsibility of the farmers, just the outside will be fenced. If you have T-Post, they will reuse them. The wooden post you can get that yourself. You can also work off your O & M that you owe. If you can't work then you can provide food for the workers and that will still count for you.

E. Each FB member shell inventory at least 3 ALUP/Farm Permit within respective FB area.

Goal Statement: With BIA and Farmer participation, reconcile and inventory as to the status of each ALUP or Farm Permit. (3ALUP x each 13 FB member)

1. None

If you work along with the project, you are doing this for yourself, your kids and your farm. Emerson went to training last year and they visited some farms and it was a very interesting training. He got a lot of information. They went through the process from the farm to the table. We even want to get a processing center here. This is not a plan that started a few years ago, this is something that started maybe in the 90's and we finally got some money to get this project going.

Lorena reported that a few weeks ago we have requested for a biological clearance and just recently BIA made that request again. No that is starting to move along, this is all three farm plots.

We need to approve A – E reports, we need a motion.

Motion-Bennie Litson

Second-Anelda Kedelty

Vote: 16 – 0 – 4

III. NEW BUSINESS

A. WUA Financial Report

Will be on the next meeting

B. Lease Agreement

On April 11, 2018 there was a meeting at NDOT on the Wheatfields/Tsaile/Blackrock Water Users Associations is a non-profit organization. The Chapter is under Navajo Nation Title 26, Farm Board is under Navajo Nation Title 3. We have the 5 year funding, right now we have received 1.7 million. We had requested for a barn. Some years back we asked to get the office that use to be occupied by Apache County, but we were told that NDOT was using it at the time. Now the Chapter and WUA got a lease agreement. WUA wanted all the scrap that is in the yard out of there, but Apache County is now saying they are working on the General Lease Agreement. Navajo Nation works with the General Lease Agreement. A question was asked if the WUA has the General Lease Agreement, but they don't, just the Chapter. Because of that the Farm Board has to be the ones that has the lease agreement with the Chapter. This has to go through the Chapter meeting. The County's lease has expired a long time ago.

Since the Farm Board is part of the Nation they can lease with the Chapter. The attorney's will be coming to an agreement. Even the concrete removal has to be approved by the EPA. That will be a report.

C. Training – Fraud Prevention

At the last meeting, we wanted a legal review and audit, but it is turning to a workshop. There will be a fraud prevention, this is going to be provided by the auditor general's office. We will have this workshop when Emerson takes his oath of office. Alfreda Lee will be giving the training.

Motion: Anelda Kedelty

Second: Yolinda Staley

Vote: 15 – 0 - 2

IV. RECEIVING REPORTS

A. Farm Board

Lorena reported her training that she went to in Farmington on the Climate Change. What is climate change and what are the concerns, resource concern, resource issues, and adaption plan processing. All these are causing the season changes. They talked about the hurricane starts from Africa, some go in the water and some on land which is the tornado. What are we planning for the future? The forecast ecosystem is changes. There will be increase of natural disasters. Volcano, flash floods, tornado and hurricane and earthquakes. Increase in drought and there will be wildfire. There is invasive species that are coming our way. What was in like Phoenix reptiles will be coming this way. There will be decline in soil quality. The impact is livestock, we put our homes on top of the mountain which causes wildlife to come out in the open. There are even salt cedar that are too many. There will be more illness. They prioritized what they thought were important which were:

1. Enforcement
2. Feral animals
3. Water
4. Grazing Management
5. Air Quality

The Division of Natural Resources priority is:

1. Over Grazing
2. Water Security
3. Land Use
4. Internal Departmental Collaboration/Communication
5. Lack of Enforcement

Division of Natural Resources hired some individuals that are experts in this area to put the information together and it will be provided. There will be Youth Hunt on September 28-30 will be in the Wheatfields area. June 8<sup>th</sup> will be the deadline, Wheatfields Chapter will have the application.

B. Water User Association

None

Motion to accept the report: Amelda Benally

Second: Bennie Litson with a comment that he asked the grazing if they have plans of what they are doing for their people. Is everyone on the same page, but it seems like everyone is working against us. The Vice President said you can plant and start a garden in your home site, but the grazing is you cannot put anything in your home site. Seems like not everyone has the same plan. Our kids are not even allowed to speak in certain meetings and they have ideas that they can share.

Vote: 14 – 0 - 1

#### V. CONCLUSION

##### A. Next Agenda Items

Same as what is on the agenda, the regular items

##### C. Next Meeting

Permittee Meeting is 4/24, 2018 at 2:00 PM

Farm Board Meeting is May 1, 2018 at 4:00 PM

##### D. Adjournment

Adjourned at: 1:58