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| **Recorder Form** |
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| Recorder: Jennifer McLaughlin | Date: April 26, 2018 |
| Session Title: Indian Lands, Natural Resources and Environmental Impacts: Sustaining our Culture and Traditions |
| Panelists: Karen Fierro, Self-Governance Director, Ak Chin Indian CommunityWilliam Lodgepole, Tribal Sustainability Coordinator, Chippewa Cree TribeGovernor J. Michael Chavarria, Santa Clara Pueblo |
| Summary of Issues and Items Discussed: Karen – Ak Chin - In desert water is very important and Climate change exists 1106 Tribal Members 5 member Council Pima Tohono O’odham Tribes. Type of farming depends flood plains. On 22,000 acres of land and growing population next to city of Maricopa (city grown to 47000 people) encouraging on communities boundaries. Primarily farming Tribes – benefitting from 1984 water settlement (first one done) mastered irrigation techniques. Cotton, corn, barley, wheat potatoes and alfalfa crops. Have 4 washes and irrigated farm fields and anytime rains in Tucson it comes into washes but currently in drought and monsoon season flash flooding in washes. One of the issues when monsoon came in couldn’t connect to First Responders – applied for FEMA grant for fire department, police and EMS. Railroad goes through community as well. Wetlands – applied for EPA grant and with the drought and different issues it has impacted wetlands and have free range cattle and wildlife issues – human impact of it – plants that do not belong there are appearing so looking at ways to improve water quality. Project is ongoing right now so do not have outcomes yet. EPA Department used natural fencing that protects grass grows up to 6 feet set up cameras to see the different effects. Council and Department put together Strategic Plan with 11 priorities and all have in common water. Air quality is important as well. We have several grants and Council Adopted and Environmental Plan so we can look at grants and funding sources. Six programs under the Performance Partnership Grants – before Pruitt we were making headway convincing the EPA to do a pilot project. We wanted to consolidate the reporting requirements. We had hopes to get it going but with the new Administration they don’t believe in climate change but we will be back. Developing a Program about climate change to identify our vulnerabilities for our water. We use solar energy project street lighting and we may include it on parking too. All buildings energy efficient and we have a chillers and surface water reclamation facilities. Capacity 50-100 tons - doubles size of plant cools casino and resort. Separate chiller for multi-purpose justice facility (housing detention) and backup generators because it is a 24 hour facility. Have a water reclamation facility that has won awards for capacity – cruise 1.2 million gallons of water per day. We wanted to look at ways to conserve water in our buildings. Waste water treatment plant produced 192 million gallons during 2017. Received numerous awards from AZ water association. Surface Water Treatment Plant won an award in 2013 has capacity 2.2 million gallons per day and provides drinking water to community and entertainment center. Ak Chin Water is very good water – reliable and safe drinking water supply. Each plant is controlled by mobile device. William Lodgepole – Chippewa Cree – Been in SG since 1994. Rocky Boy Montana located in north central Montana 60 miles south of Canadian border – reservation rolling hills and farmlands. Rocky Boy most of homes located along drainage southern part of reservation to northwest part of the reservation. Culture and Philosophy – be kind, respect each other, help each other out and respect all living things. We have been following the BIA for a long time. Resource management plan and agriculture management plan – finished first one and all the goals we set for the plan we met for the natural resources. Tribal historic preservation, tribal energy came about and 2nd plan we addressed climate and put all outcomes in climate tied to natural resources. Montana Climate Action Plan – has a lot of the things that the Tribal plan included to address climate issues. Grants and community members involved in raising their own food. We are pursuing the goal of having our own foods and garden and cattle. After SG safety of dams, wildfire management (compacted the program) and used our philosophy to manage our lands. Used wildland fire to control brush and fire fuels. We created Environmental Protection, Tribal Historic Preservation and our own Radio Station for the Tribe. Northern Winds – Casino – it has been in existence for 10 years. Justice Center established to mitigate some of the issues on the reservation. Also have a loan company. Tribal Disaster Emergency Services – flooding 2010, 2012, and 2013 and we were one of the first Tribes to implement FEMA. Forest Management – forester by trade – we had a pine beetle outbreak when we were looking into SG. First female forester was working on managing the problem – we had timber sales and had forest epidemologist come in and write plans on how to fight mountain pine beetle problem. Harvested 1500 acres 1994-2014 and with the help of epidemologist we were able to get a handle on our problem. They would come out each year and they were surprised with the positive results. 1500 acres we were able to control the bug – which is a good thing. Harvest Plan – said prayers to bugs and trees so we could preserve the forest. Prayers and tobacco and using Cree Philosophy helped manage the forest. We talked about it in ceremonies and elders and people would be dreaming about it. SG we were able to implement Cree philosophy and Cree beliefs. When epedimologist came back they were really surprised how much green was out there in our forest. We applied intense management to our forests and that was a good thing. Raise own money – transport Vets to appointments and they are wanted all over Montana to lead parades. People make own desk with own forest product. Prioritized needs and number one initiative is water shortage. Business community set timeline for each priority – all in alignment with principals of sustainability. April is the frog moon – tadpoles. August time to fly move but the birds were still around in November (because of climate change) New health clinic opened all with own money. The 2nd clinic fell into creek when it flooded. Justice Center – Cultural Resources Office built a new building. Failures do not have to define who you are (Journey map) Forests – harvest logs – bought portable saw mill and want to build own log cabins so we can use our own resources. We started a project to install solar panels. Fight against meth and substance abuse and we walk to continue this effort. Sustainability – we used FEMA Model and applied own perspective. Pow Wow – Water – Medicines – Tee Pee at Sundance. People Prosperity and Planning – three pillars of sustainability. Mountains – Sweet grass Hills – Tribe fought to keep gold miners away. We are not supposed to plan for anything bad because it is asking for something bad to happen. So we plan for methods to be here after. Governor J. Michael Chavarria – Santa Clara Pueblo – Tribal Collaboration and PartnershipPlace of Wild Roses – one of the oldest occupied places in the US – Village place where rabbits gather – one of 6 Tewa speakers in New Mexico – lost aboriginal lands to other governments and settlements. 1540 Coronado Expedition first contact with Europeans – 1680 Pueblo Revolt all Pueblos united and drove Europeans from Pueblo country (New Mexico) 1864 Lincoln recognized Pueblo loyalty and sovereignty presented cane of authority to each of the Pueblo governors. Culture and tradition survive and continue to be passed down – school performs dances and performs songs and pottery sold nationwide. Use lands hunting fishing gathering food and medicine and as spiritual sanctuary. Santa Clara Creek life and soul of the Santa Clara people. 1995 worked with EPA to improve water quality standards to protect water – created water quality standards – promote health social welfare and economic well-being of the Pueblo. SG – historically did not have a forest management department until 2000 – fires burn many acres – needed to manage forest resources. Compact forest management into multi-year funding agreement. 80% forests – forest fires. Conchas Burn Area 2011 – 156,600 acres – first day 40,000 acres burned – 2nd day 60,000 burn rate 1 acre per second due to climate change. Monitoring area and protect from flooding. Elders back in 1900 were in the forest surveying the land and protecting cultural uses of forests. Have 57,000 acres of land – 5,000 feet in elevation and 11,000 feet in headwaters – surrounded by National forests. National Laboratory where parts of the atomic bomb were created just south of our borders. We are looking to plant $5 million seeds cost $5 million dollars. Forestry Program – many Tribal members – other tribal members and some non-Indians. Forest insect and disease projects to address issues with forest. Use Douglas Fir for our cultural activities so it is important that we protect that species. Tribal and Agency Agreements – 2004 Tribal Forest Protection Act Forest Service and BLM – enter into agreements to protect and preserve forest and cultural sites. Enter negotiation and discussion with Forest and Park Service – requested to compact certain functions. Important to understand your priorities and how their authorities implement these agreements. Federal Register Programs eligible for inclusion in Funding Agreements – we identified various activities we wanted to implement via Agreement. Tribal Forest Protection Act 108-278 stewardship agreements important to all to address the threat of wildfires in the west. Empower Tribal government as care takers of their land is a smart policy. Gallina Creek – ecological and cultural projects reforestation, stream restoration, hazardous fuels reduction, and timber stand improvement, insect disease mitigation, and aspen enhancement. When it snows in the Winter it gets caught in the canopy and when melts it will fall into streams and waters. Spruce Fir 11,000 acres in elevation – a lot of the medicinal plants and food for deer and elk and turkeys. Contour Tree Felling, Log Erosion Barriers, Directional Tree Felling, and Stream Grade Control Structure – staff learn differently – you can explain it but good to show them and they can take sketches into field to see how to do it. MOU between Pueblo and US Fish and Wildlife Service – support Native fish, wildlife and natural resources – goals and objectives – build long term working relationship and mutually beneficial partnership. Advances Tribal sovereignty, Tribal land management and the protection of culture sensitive areas. Flood Control Program – flood mitigation. How to plan water resource project with the Army Corps of Engineers – talks about authorities and partnerships – important information on how to start a project. Identifies the authorities v. Appropriations (good information to share with Tribal leaders) Bureau of Reclamation – burn construction earth berm and sheet piling project. Creek is only as wide as table – working with FEMA to Declare Natural Disaster. Worked with USDA for Woody Residue – Interior Resilient Landscape Project – hazardous fuel treatments on 2000 acres – reduce them by use of prescribed burn. Pinyon/Juniper Forests. Reserve Treaty Rights Program – Department of Interior – off-reservation priority is protection of Tribal trust resources – threats from US lands that may harm Tribal lands – fire, floods, insects, diseases. Use the funds to do the work on the surrounding property. National Park Service – Cooperative Agreements – protect forests lands, natural and cultural resource management. In recent talks with Forest Service they want to streamline NEPA. The Forest Service needs to be careful and not shortchange govt to govt consultation and they need to understand the 106 process takes time. Many times only archeological resources are noted but there are also cultural resources there. Traditional cultural property is place based on non-renewable. NEPA does not just look at impacts but also considered social and cultural effects. Once an area is disturbed it cannot be restored so there cannot be any mitigation. These important things are coming around. We need to stand strong because of all these laws. We need to work together and get that word out. Pueblo works with various Federal agencies, state, counties and cities because cannot do it alone. It is also important to work with non-governmental agencies philanthropic agencies to fill the gaps. Small communities and not financially wealthy but wealthy with culture and tradition and language is important. Protect our people and animals – they are all important to us. Our lands are our spiritual sanctuary, grocery store, pharmacy, clothing store, etc. We need to teach our kids language, culture and traditions. Power of prayer has helped us overcome these challenges in our life help us to stay positive. They are trying to erode Tribal sovereignty and the Trust and we need to protect it.  |
| Questions from the Audience:George Lopez – Klamath Tribes – At Klamath Tribes two Departments and they don’t speak same language and see the same vision and how do you deal with that? How do you get a unified Tribal response to the project?Answer: We have had that challenge – Tribal Historic Preservation Project – we have a highway project – you need to come together and communicate because if you don’t communicate you will not understand the ultimate goal. There is always room for amendments to the plan. Compromising, collaborating is all important. Answer: At Rocky Boy group meets once a month – Advisory Committee – all different departments meet and talk about the different projects. We are in a healing moment recovering from things and lack of communication put us into this situation. SG Coordinator asked what does success look like – everyone is at the table because they know how important it is. When people separate out and not show up for meetings there is something going on there. Answer: Forest Manager back in the day and first project we did we involved our cultural resources department because we needed to protect those resources vital to Tribe.Red lake – Working on Tribal Constitution for four years – we came across a conference called the rights of nature. Ho Chunk amended constitution to put the rights of nature in their constitution. We plan on putting it in our constitution this year. Do the South west Tribes plan to do it?Answer: The Pueblo have different forms of government – we have a constitution but some Pueblos have their traditional forms of government. It does identify the protection of cultural resources so it is something each Tribe will have to think about. A lot of things are unwritten – but if the children don’t understand the history it needs to be documented somewhere so they understand it.  |
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