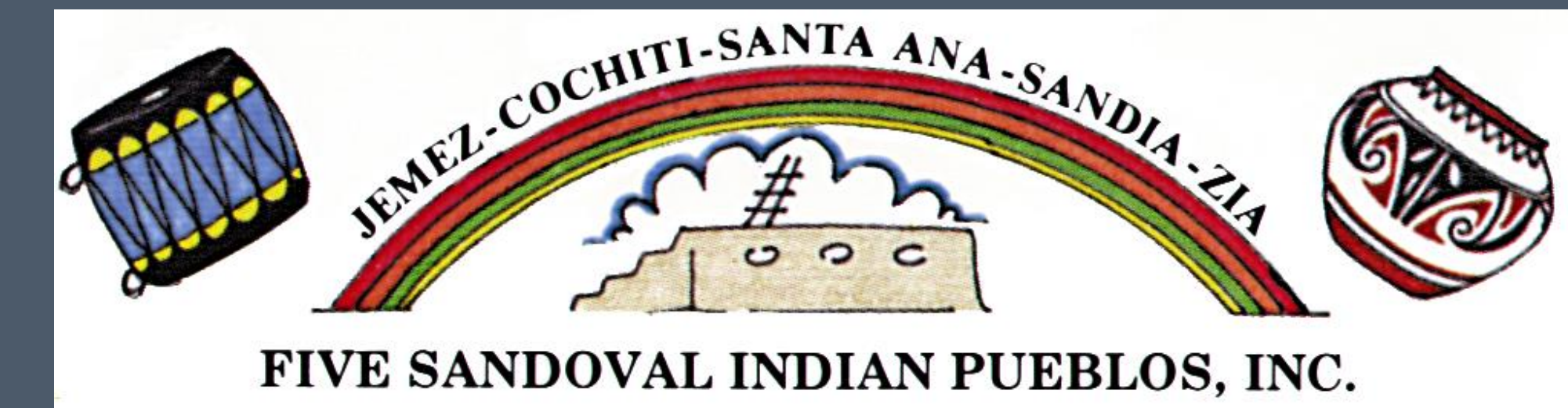




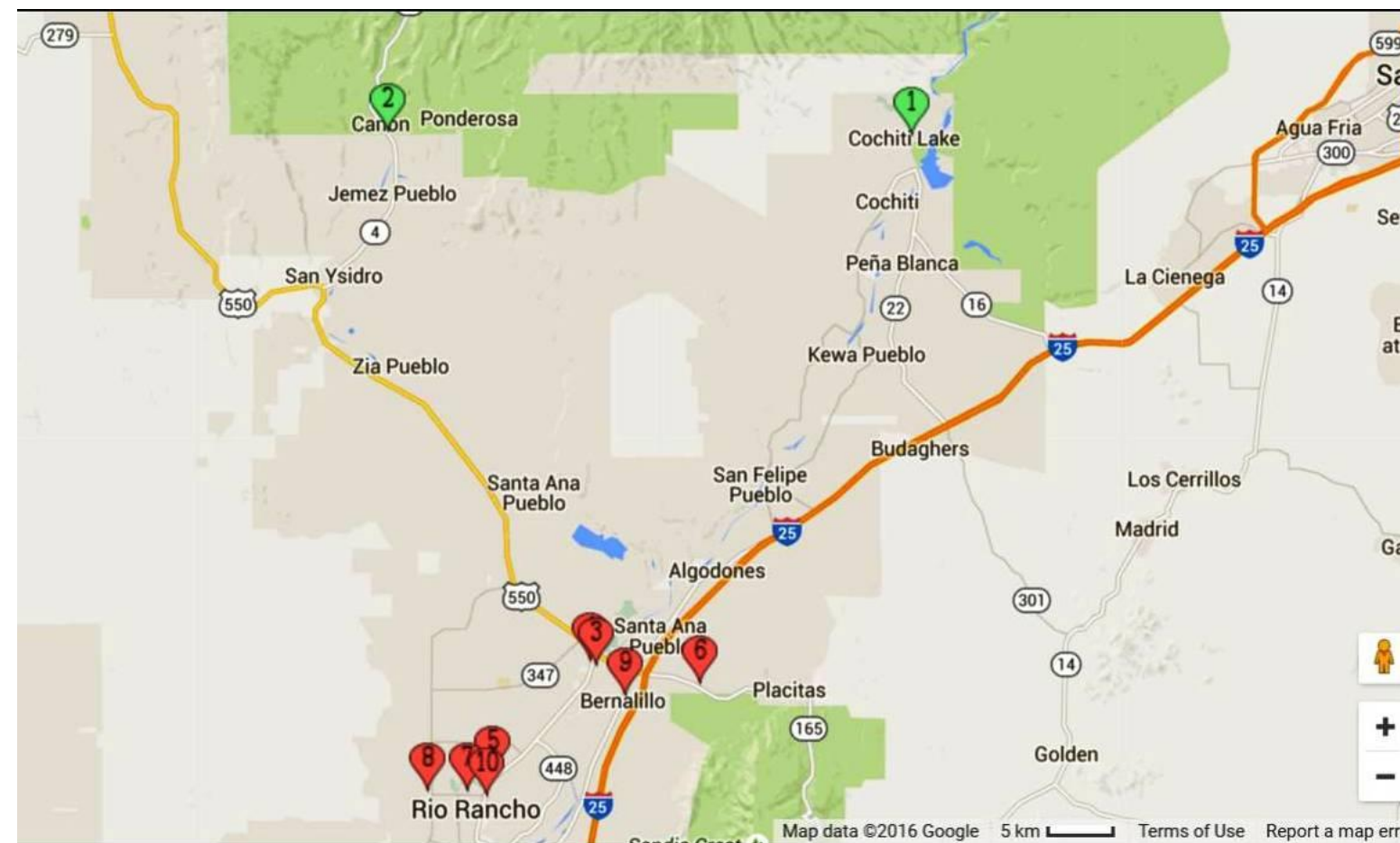
WOULD YOU WALK 40 MILES FOR AN APPLE? BRINGING FOOD EQUITY TO INDIAN COUNTRY

Get Fresh – Get Healthy Coalition | Five Sandoval Indian Pueblos, Inc. WIC | Bernalillo, NM | Presented By: Gail Crane, Project Coordinator



INTRODUCTION

- In Sandoval County, NM there are 15 grocery stores serving 102,120 residents –spread across 3710 square miles. These 15 stores are generally located in the city of Rio Rancho – population 93,500, land area 103 sq mi on the southern border of the County.
- 40 mi northeast of Rio Rancho the Cochiti pueblo is served by the Pueblo de Cochiti Minimart. Approximately 35 mi to the Northwest is the Pueblo of Jemez, which runs a small Convenience store.



- These convenience stores sell mainly sugar sweetened and caffeinated beverages and sweet or salty high fat snacks. As of January 1, 2016 there were NO fresh fruits and vegetables for sale in the Cochiti store, and a few potatoes, tomatoes and heads of lettuce at Jemez.
- Members of these communities must travel 70 to 80 miles round trip for healthy groceries, without the convenience of public transportation or easy access to highways or even paved roads.



PROJECT OVERVIEW

- Five Sandoval Indian Pueblos (FSIP) provides a range of community and health services to the members of our affiliated Pueblos: Pueblo de Cochiti, Pueblo of Jemez, Sandia Pueblo, Santa Ana Pueblo and Zia Pueblo in Sandoval County, NM. We also welcome non-Native members of surrounding geographic areas for the majority of our programs.
- With the unique geography and complex social organization of our target area, and verified by findings from the Community Health Needs Assessment, we chose two initiatives relating to **Improving Access to Healthy Food Environments** :
 - Increase the number of stores that accept WIC in the target community
 - And
 - Increase the number of existing stores that expand their inventory of “healthy” foods in the target community

ACTIVITIES

- Gathered information from current WIC staff and FSIP staff, and WIC participants, site visits to current WIC-approved stores, and completed required Community Health Needs Assessment.
- Determined most critical needs in the Community
- Agreed on interventions for healthy food environments
- Significant Community outreach for relationship building to gain trust and participation
- Recruited Community stakeholders for “Get Fresh – Get Healthy” Coalition
- Obtained Technical Assistance from The Food Trust on how to approach and motivate stores
- Evaluated business process and status changes by Partners and re-designed activities to achieve desired outcomes
- Supported one store to achieve WIC-approved status
- Worked with MoGro and Jemez Pueblo to bring organic produce to the Pueblo members directly as we identify processes to get fresh produce available in the Pueblo convenience stores.



Pueblo de Cochiti MiniMart is preparing to come on board as a WIC vendor



Example of a MoGro Food Club box

OUTCOMES

- The most exciting outcome of this project was the development/establishment of relationships and partnerships in the Community. We consciously spend time and effort to interact with the Community through constant in-person interactions, formal and informal meetings, participation in Community activities, and informal education through discussions and sharing of information.
 - > The outcome was breaking down barriers with traditionally very private groups to achieve acceptance as trusted partners, and helping isolated peer groups (tribes) to interact.
 - > By acknowledging and working towards their needs, we were also able to build partnerships with a local produce vendor, the Health Services Clinic of a large, remote Pueblo, and the only existing stores in the remote areas to work with us to identify ways to achieve the goal of fresh foods in the rural Community.
- We are also pleased that despite changes in the operation of several targeted businesses in the Community we were able to add a new WIC-approved vendor in an underserved remote area.
 - > The contract is under review and we expect full APPROVED status in the next few months.
 - > The vendor is also working with us to expand availability of fresh produce in time for the summer tourist season.
- The third exciting outcome was acceptance by NWA as a sub-awardee for Cohort 2 of CPHMC.
 - > This recognition of our efforts and progress despite unforeseen obstacles is energizing to the “Get Fresh – Get Healthy” Coalition and our Community partners.



LESSONS LEARNED

- Depending on the culture, groups/tribes can be very private. Privacy can manifest as a distrust of “outsiders”.
 - > In our case, tribes did not readily share information even among themselves.
 - > They also avoid most publicity, including sharing photos or published articles.
- Geography plays a huge role in project planning and activities.
 - > Travel time can double or even triple the time required to attend meetings.
 - > We found that traveling to their location was well received by our partners.
- Plans are only PLANS – business decisions and changes on the part of our partners caused us to rethink some of our sub-objectives and be creative in designing solutions



One of the WIC stores we targeted to expand fresh produce did not renew their contract



Audrey is a Health Advisor for Jemez Pueblo. She is picking up the MoGro boxes to distribute to the community members

BEST PRACTICES

- Relationship building is key and takes time, effort, repeated interactions, and always delivering on promises.
- Be sure to share information freely even if it is not directly related to your own project initiatives.
- Participate in community activities such as Health Fairs, Arts & Crafts Fairs, Fun Runs, and attend cultural activities. This is especially true if you are not of the same cultural group or are new to the community.
- Remember that activities and expectations must be win-win-win outcomes for all partners in the program.
- Learn how the community information channels work: some groups have formal information methods; some may use central bulletin board type posting areas; in other areas there may be “thought leaders” and communication is more word of mouth.
- Consciously and consistently celebrate successes and give credit to the team!

NEXT STEPS

- First of all, we are very excited to be chosen for CPHMC Cohort 2. Our Cohort 1 activities got a late start (May 2015), so being able to continue activities under the auspices of NWA means we can implement our current – in some cases, revised – environmental and systems changes, and work on additional activities in the area to build on what we started.
- Our initiative to pursue credentialing, certification and potentially licensing of CHR/CHWs could lead to their being able to bill for non-WIC services. This would be a great step to make the community and clinical linkage initiatives self-supporting.
- The healthy food environment initiatives have the opportunity to become self-sustaining as the stores experience the benefits of greater sales once the community recognizes the availability of the healthy foods. At the same time, we are looking to have local growers cooperate with the stores to supply local produce to the stores.