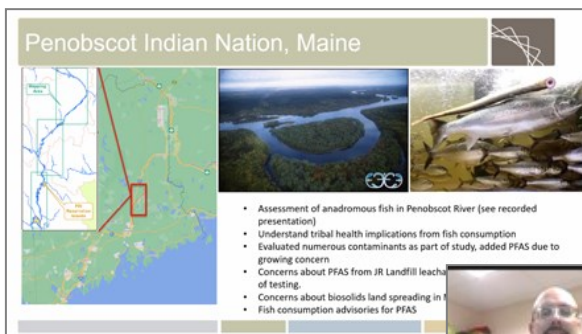
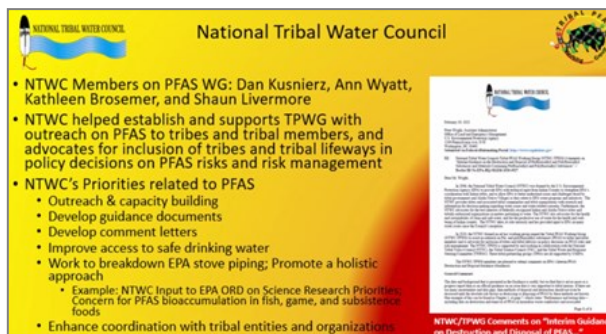




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## Tribal PFAS Working Group at Tribal Lands and Environment Forum



*TLEF Presentations by Dan Kusnierz, NTWC & Tribal PFAS WG Member*



The Tribal PFAS Working Group presented at this year's ITEP Tribal Lands and Environment Forum (TLEF) on August 18, 2021. The Tribal PFAS Working Group's presentation included an overview of the working group, background information, current priorities, and accomplishments. The Tribal PFAS Working Group consists of members from five (5) tribal partnerships: National Tribal Water Council (NTWC), Tribal Science Council (TSC), National Tribal Toxics Council (NTTC), Tribal Waste and Response Steering Committee (TWRSC), and Tribal Pesticide Program Council (TPPC).

Here are a few highlights of the presentation:

- Each tribal partner expressed their concerns about PFAS and the environment. Dan Kusnierz represented the National Tribal Water Council and discussed how the NTWC is addressing PFAS concerns. Recently, the NTWC provided feedback to the EPA Office of Research and Development on science research priorities. The NTWC expressed concerns regarding the bioaccumulation of PFAS in fish, game, and subsistence foods.
- The Tribal PFAS Working Group in collaboration with the Environmental Working Group (EWG) generated an interactive map titled "PFAS Contamination Across Tribal Lands." Mark Junker, TWRSC, and Scott Walz, TSC, sought the assistance of the EWG to develop this map. The map displays areas where there are PFAS detections in locations near or on tribal reservations. To access the map, please visit: [https://www.ewg.org/interactive-maps/PFAS\\_tribal\\_lands/map/](https://www.ewg.org/interactive-maps/PFAS_tribal_lands/map/)



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## Tribal PFAS Working Group at TLEF (*continued*)

- The working group has a new webpage tab on NTWC's website and Facebook page to provide information and resources on PFAS for tribes. The webpage tab may be found at <http://www7.nau.edu/itep/main/ntwc/Issues/PFAS> Also, the working group Facebook page may be found at <https://www.facebook.com/TribalPFASWorkGroup/>

Additionally, the Tribal PFAS Working Group members participated in another TLEF sessions, hosted by Kaylene Ritter of Abt Associates. She works in conjunction with tribes on various environmental projects. The title of the sessions were *PFAS on Tribal Lands: Part 1 and Part 2*. Dan Kusnierz presented on the Penobscot Indian Nation's work to characterize PFAS contamination in anadromous fish that are returning to the Penobscot River in collaboration with the EPA and Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR).

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The recording of the Tribal PFAS Working Group's presentation may be accessed at:  
<http://www7.nau.edu/itep/main/ntwc/Issues/PFAS>

The presentation titled "One Health Assessment of Mercury, Persistent Organic Compounds and PFAS for Consumption of Restored Anadromous Fish in the Penobscot River" may be accessed at:  
[https://mediaspace.nau.edu/media/1\\_s1okdkk2/](https://mediaspace.nau.edu/media/1_s1okdkk2/)

## Updates and Announcements

### **NEW!** EPA Tribal Wetlands Virtual Workshop

The EPA will be hosting a virtual EPA Tribal Wetlands Workshop on September 20-23, and September 27-30 from 8:00 AM to 12:30 PM PT. A workshop will be provided for tribes in the Northern Great Plains and Rocky Mountain ecosystems who have, or are planning, wetlands protection programs. This workshop will focus on developing wetland program plans, funding opportunities, and specific challenges tribes face today.

A separate training on building collaboration skills among tribes will be offered to those interested. This workshop will focus on training sessions and guidance on forming and sustaining coalitions.

To express interest in attending, please visit: [EPA Tribal Wetlands Virtual Workshop Survey \(surveymonkey.com\)](https://surveymonkey.com/EPA-Tribal-Wetlands-Virtual-Workshop-Survey)

### **NEW!** ITCA/BIA Climate Resilience Virtual Workshop: Water Quality and Health Effects - Effective Risk Communication in the Context of Tribal Resilience

The University of Arizona Southwest Environmental Health Sciences Center (SWEHSC) in partnership with the Inter Tribal Council of Arizona will be hosting a two-day virtual workshop on "Water Quality and Health Effects – Effective Risk Communication in the Context of Tribal Resilience." The workshop is scheduled on September 23-24, 2021 (9:00 AM to 12:00 PM MST).

To register, please visit: [https://uarizona.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\\_5o6Q7LBxJ7hmHgW](https://uarizona.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_5o6Q7LBxJ7hmHgW)

**Ends: September 7, 2021**

The consultation ends on **September 7, 2021**. For additional information, please visit <https://tcots.epa.gov> for the consultation materials. For more information on the CWA Section 401, please visit: <https://www.epa.gov/cwa-401>

**Ends: September 13, 2021**

Water quality standards define the goals for water bodies and establish the criteria that must be met to support those goals, serving as the foundation for controlling pollution as mandated by the CWA. With the proposed rulemaking, the EPA will be better equipped to work with tribal governments to improve water quality in impaired waters and prevent future degradation of tribal waters.

The consultation ends on **September 13, 2021**. For additional information, please visit <https://tcots.epa.gov> for the consultation materials. For additional information on this forthcoming rulemaking, please visit: <https://www.epa.gov/wqs-tech/promulgation-tribal-baseline-water-quality-standards-under-clean-water-act>.

## Ends: September 13, 2021

The consultation ends on **September 13, 2021**. For additional information, please visit <https://tcots.epa.gov> for the consultation materials. For additional information about this forthcoming rulemaking, please visit: <https://www.epa.gov/wqs-tech/revising-federal-water-quality-standards-regulations-protect-tribal-reserved-rights>.

## Tribal Consultation and Public Comment Opportunities (*continued*)

### **Public Comment Opportunity: Announcement of the Draft Fifth Contaminant Candidate List**

**Ends: September 17, 2021**

The EPA published the Draft Fifth Contaminant Candidate List (CCL 5). The CCL is a list of contaminants that are currently not subject to any proposed or promulgated national primary drinking water regulations but are known or anticipated to occur in public water systems. The Draft CCL 5 includes 66 chemicals, three chemical groups (per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS), cyanotoxins, and disinfection byproducts (DBPs)), and 12 microbes, which were selected from a universe of chemicals used in commerce, pesticides, biological toxins, disinfection byproducts, and waterborne pathogens.

The EPA is seeking comment on the Draft CCL 5 and the process used to select the contaminants. The deadline to submit comments is **September 17, 2021**. Please submit comments at: <https://www.regulations.gov/document/EPA-HQ-OW-2018-0594-0031>. For additional information about the Draft CCL5, please visit: <https://www.epa.gov/ccl/contaminant-candidate-list-5-ccl-5>.

### **Tribal Consultation Opportunity: Revising the Definition of the “Waters of the U.S.”**

**Ends: October 4, 2021**

The EPA and the U.S. Department of the Army, (“the agencies,” hereafter) are conducting consultation and coordination with federally recognized tribes on the agencies’ effort to revise the definition of “Waters of the U.S.” On June 9, 2021, the agencies announced their intent to initiate a new rulemaking process that restores the regulations in place prior to the 2015 Clean Water Rule defining “waters of the United States,” amended to be consistent with relevant Supreme Court decisions.

“Waters of the U.S.” is a threshold term in the Clean Water Act that establishes the geographic scope of federal jurisdiction under the Clean Water Act. Since the 1970s, the agencies have defined “Waters of the U.S.” by regulation. The agencies most recently revised these regulations in 2020 with the Navigable Waters Protection Rule: Definition of “Waters of the U.S.”

The consultation ends on **October 4, 2021**. Please visit <https://tcots.epa.gov/> for the consultation materials. For additional information about the “Waters of the U.S.,” please visit: <https://www.epa.gov/wotus>.

### **Tribal Consultation Opportunity: EPA/AIEO Tribal Consultation on GAP Funding Allocation**

**Ends: November 17, 2021**

The EPA’s American Indian Environmental Office (AIEO) initiated a 120-day tribal consultation with federally recognized tribes to receive input on how to improve the national allocation of the Indian Environmental General Assistance Program (GAP) funds. In the current national allocation methodology, EPA provides \$110,000 per federally recognized tribe. However, a 2008 OIG report included a recommendation that AIEO revise its allocation methodology to take into account tribes’ environmental needs and prior progress.

The AIEO is conducting an introductory call and a series of regional webinars/listening sessions.

- August 26 (3:00-4:30 PM EDT) for Tribes in Region 9
- August 31 (3:00-4:30 PM EDT) for Tribes in Region 10
- September 2 (3:30-5:00 PM EDT) for Intertribal Consortia

The consultation ends on **November 17, 2021**. Please visit <https://tcots.epa.gov> for more detailed information on the webinars/listening session and consultation materials.

## Grant Opportunities

### **NOAA/NIDIS FY 2022 Coping with Drought Grants**

**Deadline: October 18, 2021**

For Fiscal Year (FY) 2022, NIDIS is hosting two separate Coping with Drought competitions: Ecological Drought and Building Tribal Drought Resilience. Both competitions are currently open and accepting letters of intent.

1. The Ecological Drought competition is focused on research and tools to improve our understanding and management of drought risk in terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems to inform more deliberate and expanded decision-making that supports sustainable, healthy and resilient ecosystems.
2. The Tribal Drought Resilience competition is focused on the implementation of actions - together with research on those actions - to build tribal drought resilience contained in existing plans and strategies.

For more information, please visit: <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/view-opportunity.html?oppld=334633> or <https://www.drought.gov/drought-research/coping-with-drought-competition#open-competitions>

## Events and Webinars

### **Inter Tribal Council of Arizona, Inc. - National Tribal Water & Wastewater Operator Training & Certification Program**

The Inter Tribal Council of Arizona, Inc. National Tribal Water and Wastewater Operator Training and Certification Program is providing live online training. Each course consists of sequential lessons that are provided in a series of live online classes that are 3-hours in length.

Upcoming courses include, but are not limited to:

- Water Treatment – Level 1: October 5 to November 9, 2021
- Water Distribution – Level 1: October 4 to November 10, 2021
- Math for Wastewater Operators: October 18 to November 3, 2021

For more information, training schedule, and to register, please visit: <https://itcaonline.com/programs/environmental-quality-programs/tws-tmap/tws-training-events/>

### **EPA Small Systems Monthly Webinar Series**

To register: <https://www.epa.gov/water-research/small-drinking-water-systems-webinar-series>

- August 30 - September 2, 2021: 18<sup>th</sup> Annual EPA Drinking Water Virtual Workshop
- October 26, 2021: Tribal Community Water Systems

### **EPA WaterSense Webinars**

To register: <https://www.epa.gov/watersense/webinars>

- September 15, 2021: Minimizing Water Use in Mechanical/HVAC Systems

### **EPA Technical Assistance Webinar Series: Improving CWA-NPDES Permit Compliance**

- September 22, 2021: Pretreatment Program Audits of Municipal Wastewater Treatment Plants: What to Expect, How to Prepare, and Common Findings
- October 21, 2021: Optimize Your Wastewater Treatment Plant: Save Energy and Reduce Nitrogen Discharge

For more information, please visit: <https://www.epa.gov/compliance/technical-assistance-webinar-series-improving-cwa-npdes-permit-compliance>



## Events and Webinars (*continued*)

### EPA Water Research Webinar Series

To register: <https://www.epa.gov/water-research/water-research-webinar-series>

- September 29, 2021: Valuing Aquatic Ecosystem Health at a National Scale: Modeling Biological Indicators Across Space/Time
- October 27, 2021: Effects of Total Nitrogen and Total Phosphorous on Chlorophyll- $\alpha$  Concentrations in Flowing Waters

### U.S. Fish and Wildlife Conservation Office Webinar Series

To register: [Event Information: Conservation of Bull trout in the Yakima Basin \(webex.com\)](#)

- September 30, 2021: Conservation of Bull Trout in the Yakima Basin

### National Tribal Water Council is Seeking Applications for Region 2 and Region 10 Members

**Deadline: September 13, 2021**

The National Tribal Water Council is now accepting applications from tribal water professionals to fill two (2) open membership positions. The positions are open to tribal water professionals employed by a federally recognized Tribe or tribally authorized organization from Region 2 (New Jersey or New York) and Region 10 (Idaho, Oregon, Washington, or Alaska). Interested candidates must submit the following: application form, letter of interest, and professional resume. The deadline to apply is September 13, 2021. The application packet is available on the NTWC website: <http://www7.nau.edu/itep/main/ntwc/>

## NTWC Members: For more information, visit [Meet the Council](#)

#### **Ken Norton**

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