

National Tribal Water Council A Year End Review of 2021 Activities

Photo: Lake Powell - Page, AZ

At the start of 2021, the National Tribal Water Council (NTWC/Council) took the opportunity to outline several key priority actions that are important and crucial to tribes. Additionally, the NTWC developed comment letters on proposed rulemakings actions, contributed to and participated in meetings, webinars, and collaborated with the EPA Office of Water throughout the year. Below is a highlight of the Council's activities this past year.

Policy Response: Developed Comment Letters on Proposed Rulemaking Actions

- Request for Regulatory Freeze of the US Army Corps of Engineers' (USACE) Reissuance and Modification of Nationwide Permits, February 12, 2021
- EPA's Executive Order 13175 Tribal Government Consultation and Coordination, March 31, 2021
- EPA's Notice of Intention to Reconsider and Revise the Clean Water Act Section 401 Rule, September 13, 2021
- EPA's Potential Revisions to the Clean Water Act Water Quality Standards Regulations to Protect Tribal Reserved Rights, September 10, 2021
- EPA's Potential Promulgation of Tribal Baseline Water Quality Standards under the Clean Water Act, September 10, 2021
- Notice of Consultation and Coordination on Revising the Definition of "Waters of the United States," October 1, 2021



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NEWSLETTER

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NTWC: A Year End Review of 2021 Activities (*continued*)

NTWC Collaborated and NTWC Members Contributed alongside Tribal Partnership Groups and the EPA

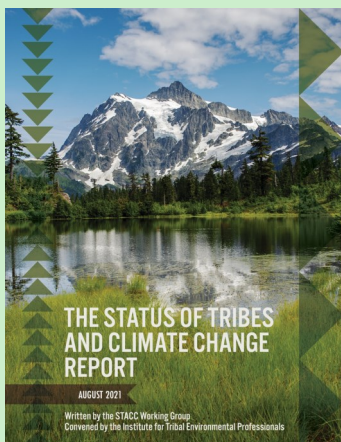
- *Status of Tribes & Climate Change Report* (STACC): Ann Wyatt and Dan Mosley, NTWC members, assisted with the Water Section of the report. *See highlighted box below for more information.*
- NTWC & Tribal PFAS Working Group Comment Letter on EPA's Interim Guidance on the Destruction and Disposal of Perfluoroalkyl and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances and Materials Containing Perfluoroalkyl and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances, February 19, 2021
- Supplemental Letter to the Transition Brief: Developed detailed actions for incoming administration, March 2, 2021
- EPA National Water Program Priority Research Needs: Provided a list of tribal research needs, March 5, 2021
- NTWC 2021 National Water Priorities Letter: Identified five key water priorities for the new administration, March 10, 2021
- EPA Office of Water's Draft 2021 Tribal Action Plan: Developed a comment letter, June 22, 2021
- Tribal Roundtable for the Lead and Copper Rule Revisions: Shaun Livermore, NTWC member, participated in the roundtable.
- EPA Office of Water - Water Quality Parameter Fact Sheets: Dan Kusnierz, NTWC member, provided feedback on the fact sheets.
- NTWC Recommendations to EPA Office of Research & Development on 2023-2026 Strategic Research Action Plan, November 5, 2021
- *A Meeting of Sacred Waters* Conference: Michael Bolt, NTWC Vice Chair, provided an overview presentation on the NTWC, November 18, 2021

Joint Bi-Annual Meetings with the EPA

The National Tribal Water Council and the EPA Office of Water jointly held their bi-annual meetings virtually on May 4-5, 2021, and December 1-2, 2021.

Recognition of Former NTWC Members

The NTWC recognizes former members that resigned this past year. NTWC greatly appreciates Rene Rickard (R-2), Phillip Cernera (R-10), Stephen Wolfe (R-6), and Lee Anna Silversmith-Martinez (Navajo Nation) for their membership and contributions.



Status of Tribes and Climate Change Report

The report seeks to uplift and honor the voices of Indigenous peoples across the U.S. to increase understanding of Tribal lifeways, cultures, and worldviews, the climate change impacts Tribes are experiencing, the solutions they are implementing, and ways that all of us can support Tribes in adapting to our changing world.

- Ann Wyatt, NTWC Member, was a member of the STACC Report Working Group and assisted with obtaining tribal narratives for the report.
- Daniel Mosley, NTWC Member, provided a tribal narrative titled "Climate Change Impacts on Water Quality and Aquatic Life, Pyramid Lake, NV."
- Charlie Schlinger, NTWC TAC, was the Chapter Lead for the report's *Chapter 4.2: Water*.

To access the report: <https://sites.google.com/view/stacc2021-itep/home>

Updates and Announcements

NTWC Accepting Applications for Membership

The National Tribal Water Council is accepting applications from tribal water professionals employed by a federally recognized Tribe or tribally authorized organization to fill four (4) open positions. We are seeking individuals that are passionate and vocal about tribal water issues. Applicants with strong writing skills are encouraged to apply.

- **Region 2 Representative:** Open to tribal water professionals from Region 2, which includes the following states: New Jersey and New York.
- **Region 6 Representative:** Open to tribal water professionals from Region 6, which includes the following states: Arkansas, Louisiana, New Mexico, Oklahoma, and Texas.
- **Region 10 Representative:** Open to tribal water professionals from Region 10, which includes the following states: Alaska, Idaho, Oregon, and Washington. *Please note:* the NTWC currently has two representatives from the State of Alaska, thus seeking applicants primarily from Idaho, Oregon, or Washington.
- **Navajo Nation Representative:** Open to tribal water professionals from the Navajo Nation.

Member duties include but are not limited to the following:

- Participating in monthly conference calls and attending bi-annual meetings;
- Collectively crafting response documents to policy and/or rulemaking actions;
- Reviewing and discussing water-related issues in Indian Country; and
- Assisting the NTWC in informing tribes on a wide variety of water issues.

Interested applicants must submit an application form, letter of interest and a professional resume. The application deadline is **December 31, 2021**. The application packet is available on the NTWC website: <http://www7.nau.edu/itep/main/ntwc/>

Tribal Consultation and Public Comment Opportunities

EPA's Proposed Revised Definition of "Waters of the United States" Rule

Deadline: February 7, 2022

On November 18, 2021, the EPA and the Department of the Army signed a proposed rule to re-establish the pre-2015 definition of "waters of the United States" which had been in place for decades, with revisions to reflect consideration of relevant Supreme Court decisions. The proposed rule supports the agencies' goal of establishing a durable definition of "waters of the United States" that protects public health, the environment, and downstream communities while supporting economic opportunity, agriculture, and other industries dependent on clean water. For more information about WOTUS: <https://www.epa.gov/wotus>

The deadline to submit public comment is **February 7, 2022**. Comments can be submitted at <https://www.regulations.gov/commenton/EPA-HQ-OW-2021-0602-0001>.

The agencies are hosting virtual public hearings on the proposed rule. The schedule is below.

- Wed, January 12, 2022 (10:00 AM-1:00 PM EST) To register: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/us-epa-and-department-of-the-army-wotus-public-hearing-tickets-211244667487>
- Thurs, January 13, 2022 (2:00 PM-5:00 PM EST) To register: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/us-epa-and-department-of-the-army-wotus-public-hearing-tickets-211258017417>
- Tues, January 18, 2022 (5:00 PM-8:00 PM EST) To register: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/us-epa-and-department-of-the-army-wotus-public-hearing-tickets-211274536827>

For information on the public hearings: <https://www.epa.gov/wotus/public-outreach-and-stakeholder-engagement-activities>

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:

- Federal SDWA 101 Regulations for Tribal Water Operators: January 19 to February 14, 2022
- Wastewater Collection - Level 2: January 19 to February 23, 2022

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

Native American Water Association, Inc.

The Native American Water Association is a National Non-Profit, 501(c)6 Organization founded to provide Tribal water and wastewater operators, managers, utility commissions and Tribal leadership with continued training and technical assistance in their goals to: Strengthen tribal sovereignty and Self-determination and protect health and environment in Indian Country.

Upcoming events include:

- Biological Treatment Process Control - Part 1: January 13, 2022
- Biological Treatment Process Control - Part 2: January 27, 2022

To register: https://www.eventbrite.com/o/native-american-water-association-22061331832#live_events

EPA Small Drinking Water Systems Webinar Series

- February 22, 2022: Tribal Community Water Systems

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



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

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