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NEWSLETTER

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NTWC MEMBERSHIP RECRUITMENT

The National Tribal Water Council is currently accepting applications from tribal water professionals to fill two open membership positions. The Council is seeking individuals that are passionate and vocal about tribal water issues. Tribal water professionals with hydrology experience are encouraged to apply.

1) Region 6 Representative

Open to tribal water professionals employed by a federally recognized tribe or tribally-authorized organization from EPA Region 6, which includes the following states: New Mexico, Texas, Oklahoma, Arkansas, and Louisiana.

2) At-Large Member

Open to all tribal water professionals employed by a federally recognized tribe or tribally-authorized organization.

Interested individuals must submit an application form, letter of interest and a resumé. NTWC will begin reviewing and considering application submissions on **April 17, 2020**, and will continue to accept applications until both membership positions have been filled. To express your interest or to obtain additional information, please contact Elaine Wilson at elaine.wilson@nau.edu or call (480) 340-2306.

Update: Navigable Waters Protection Rule - Waters of the U.S. Step 2

On January 23, 2020, the U.S. EPA and the Department of the Army finalized the Navigable Waters Protection Rule to define "Waters of the U.S." The agencies have streamlined the definition so that it includes four simple categories of jurisdictional waters, provides clear exclusions for many water features that traditionally have not been regulated, and defines terms in the regulatory text that have never been defined before. The final rule also details 12 categories of exclusions, features that are not "Waters of the U.S."

Under the final "Step 2" rule, four clear categories of waters are federally regulated:

- Territorial seas and traditional navigable waters,
- Perennial and intermittent tributaries to those waters,
- Certain lakes, ponds, and impoundments, and
- Wetlands adjacent to jurisdictional waters.

This final rule will become effective 60 days after publication in the *Federal Register* and will replace the Step One Rule published in October 2019. The rule, fact sheets, and other information can be found at the EPA website: <https://www.epa.gov/nwpr/navigable-waters-protection-rule-step-two-revise>



Consultation and Public Comment Opportunities

Public Comment Opportunity: Update to the Regulations Implementing the Procedural Provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act

ENDS: March 10, 2020

The Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) is proposing to update its regulations for implementing the procedural provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). This proposed rule would modernize and clarify the regulations to facilitate more efficient, effective, and timely NEPA reviews by federal agencies in connection with proposals for agency action. The proposed amendments would advance the original goals of the CEQ regulations to reduce paperwork and delays, and promote better decisions consistent with the national environmental policy set forth in section 101 of NEPA. If finalized, the proposed rule would comprehensively update and substantially revise the 1978 regulations.

For more information: <https://www.regulations.gov/document?D=CEQ-2019-0003-0001>

Public Comment Opportunity: Proposed Information Collection Request (ICR) for 2020 Drinking Water Infrastructure Needs Survey and Assessment (DWINSAs)

ENDS: April 6 2020

The EPA has issued a proposed ICR for the upcoming 2020 DWINSAs, providing an opportunity for the public to provide input on the 2020 DWINSAs. From September 6, 2019 to November 28, 2019, the EPA consulted with tribes on the forthcoming 2020 DWINSAs, seeking input on the proposed policies and methods for the 2020 DWINSAs. The Agency is currently reviewing and considering the comments that it received from tribes during the consultation period.

The proposed ICR provides another opportunity for commenting on the upcoming 2020 DWINSAs. The EPA is particularly interested in receiving input from tribes on the estimates of the time burden on sampled water systems to respond to the survey questionnaire as well as the importance of including American Indian (AI)/Alaska Native Villages (ANV) systems in the 2020 DWINSAs effort.

For more information: <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/FR-2020-02-05/pdf/2020-02263.pdf>. Comments should be submitted through Docket ID No. EPA-HQ-OW-2020-0017 online via <https://www.regulations.gov>.

Tribal Consultation Opportunity: Draft Guiding Principles for Consulting with Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (ANCSA) Corporations

ENDS: April 14, 2020

In 2004, through two Consolidated Appropriations Acts, Congress directed all federal agencies to hereafter consult with corporations established under ANCSA in 1971 “on the same basis as Indian tribes under Executive Order 13175.” The EPA has a long history of engaging with ANCSA corporations and now seeks to formalize this process. The proposed action is also responsive to the findings and recommendations of the Government Accountability Office’s draft report, “Tribal Consultation Additional Federal Action Needed for Infrastructure Projects (GAO-19-22),” which recommended that the EPA “develop a documented policy or clarify existing policy to implement the statutory requirement to consult with [ANCSA corporations] on the same basis as Indian tribes under Executive Order 13175.”

Scheduled outreach:

- An in-person consultation is planned concurrent with the Alaska Forum on the Environment the week of February 20, 2020.
- A national conference call is scheduled for March 2, 2020, from 10:00 – 11:30 AM AKST. The call-in number is: 1-866-299-3188, and the code is: 202-564-9957.

For more information: <https://tcots.epa.gov>.

Consultation and Public Comment Opportunities (*Continued*)

Public Comment Opportunity: 2020 National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Multi-Sector General Permit

Ends: 60 Days After F.R. Publication

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) will be seeking public comment on the proposed 2020 National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Multi-Sector General Permit (MSGP) for stormwater discharges associated with industrial activity in areas where the EPA is the NPDES permitting authority. Key proposed changes in the permit include new requirements for permit eligibility, authorization, monitoring, and updates to the stormwater control fact sheets.

The EPA will take comments on the proposal during a 60-day comment period, which will begin upon publication in the *Federal Register*. Comments can be submitted on www.regulations.gov for docket ID # EPA-HQ-OW-2019-0372.

The EPA will host two informational webcasts to give an overview of the proposed changes to the permit (Please note: The two webcasts will cover the same content).

- Tuesday, March 10, 2020; 1:00 PM – 2:30 PM (EST)
To register: <https://register.gotowebinar.com/register/4215045298437246477>
- Thursday, April 9, 2020; 1:00 PM – 2:30 PM (EST)
To register: <https://register.gotowebinar.com/register/7302889564627695629>

For more information, please visit: <https://www.epa.gov/npdes/stormwater-discharges-industrial-activities>

Public Comment Opportunity: Preliminary Regulatory Determinations for EPA's Contaminant Candidate List (CCL) 4

Ends: 60 Days After F.R. Publication

On February 20, 2020, the EPA announced and requested public comment on the preliminary regulatory determinations for eight contaminants on the fourth Contaminant Candidate List (CCL 4).

The EPA is making preliminary determinations to regulate perfluorooctanesulfonic acid (PFOS) and perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA) in drinking water and to not regulate six contaminants (i.e., 1,1-dichloroethane, acetochlor, methyl bromide (bromomethane), metolachlor, nitrobenzene, and RDX).

The EPA is taking public comment on these preliminary determinations for 60 days after publication in the Federal Register. Instructions for submitting comments are included in the announcement in the Federal Register via <https://www.regulations.gov> Docket ID No. EPA-HQ-OW-2019-0583. The docket will be open once the notice is published in the Federal Register.

A copy of the pre-publication notice and additional information about CCL4 and regulatory determinations can be found at: <https://www.epa.gov/ccl/regulatory-determination-4>.





Funding Opportunity: Tribal Adaptation, Ocean & Coastal Management, and Planning Grants

Application Deadline: March 2, 2020

The BIA Tribal Resilience Program (TRP) provides federal-wide resources to tribes to build capacity and resilience through leadership engagement, delivery of data and tools, training and tribal capacity building. The Tribal Resilience Program has announced grant opportunities to support Tribal Nations that need adaptation planning support and decision-making

information to prepare for extreme events and harmful environmental trends that impact tribal treaty and trust resources, economies, infrastructure, and human health welfare.

Deadline for proposal submission is **Monday, March 2, 2020**. For more information, please visit: <https://www.bia.gov/bia/ots/tribal-resilience-program#FY2020>

Funding Opportunity: Reduction in Lead Exposure via Drinking Water Grants

Application Deadline: April 20, 2020

Authorized under the Water Infrastructure Improvements for the Nation (WIIN) Act, the Reduction in Lead Exposure via Drinking Water Grant creates a new program under section 1459B of the Safe Drinking Water Act. The EPA is seeking applications to fulfill eligible projects/activities under the WIIN grant for two National Priority Areas. The EPA expects to award four to fifteen assistance agreement awards under two National Priority Areas.

- One to three awards are anticipated under the Reduction of Lead Exposure in the Nation's Drinking Water Systems through Infrastructure and Treatment Improvements National Priority Area, with an estimated total of \$17,100,000.
- Three to twelve awards are anticipated under the Reduction of Children's Exposure to Lead in Drinking Water in Schools and Child Care Facilities National Priority Area, with an estimated total of up to \$22,800,000.

The application period will remain open for submissions until April 20, 2020. Water systems located in an area governed by an Indian tribe are eligible to apply. For more information and to view the RFA, please visit: <https://www.epa.gov/dwcapacity/wiin-grant-reduction-lead-exposure-drinking-water-under-sdwa-section-1459b>.

Funding Opportunity: Tribal Wildlife Grant

Application Deadline: May 4, 2020

The U.S. Department of Interior - Fish and Wildlife Service Tribal Wildlife Grants Program provides a competitive funding opportunity for federally recognized tribal governments to develop and implement programs for the benefit of wildlife and their habitats, including species of Native American cultural or traditional importance and species that are not hunted or fished.

Deadline for proposal submission is **Tuesday, May 4, 2020**. For more information, please visit: <https://www.fws.gov/nativeamerican/grants.html>

CALL FOR PROPOSALS:

2020 National Tribal & Indigenous Climate Conference - Aug. 31-Sept. 4, 2020

Proposal Deadline: April 3, 2020

The Institute for Tribal Environmental Professionals (ITEP) is honored to host the United States' First Biennial National Tribal and Indigenous Climate Conference (NTICC) along with support from the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) Tribal Resilience Program. We invite people to submit proposals discussing climate-related impacts, assessments, tools, adaptation planning, and mitigation. Water is a conference track and potential topics include, but are not limited to: drinking water, harmful algal blooms, wetlands, and surface waters.

For more information, please visit: <https://sites.google.com/view/2020-nticc-itep/home>



Upcoming Events

Inter Tribal Council of Arizona, Inc. - Tribal Operator Certification Training

This course is for tribal drinking water treatment facility operators. Course topics include, but not limited to, intro to surface water, groundwater and wells, water treatment processes, regulatory compliance, Safe Drinking Water Act, water safety, and math relating to water facility operations. For more information, please visit <https://itcaonline.com/2017-tribal-water-and-wastewater-operator-training-and-examination-calendar/>

- **Water Distribution - Level 1**
March 9-12, 2020; Laughlin, NV
April 6-10, 2020; Flagstaff, AZ
- **Water Treatment - Level 1**
April 20-24, 2020; Mobridge, SD

ITCA: Tribal Utility Management Training

March 30 - April 3, 2020; Coachella CA
This is a FREE training course for Tribal personnel offered by the ITCA National Tribal Water & Wastewater Operator Certification Program. For this training event, **travel expense reimbursement stipends (partial reimbursement) are available**. A preliminary application for proposed travel costs is required to be considered for funding by ITCA. Preliminary applications will be considered on a first-come first-served basis and will be subject to funding availability. For more information: <https://itcaonline.com/tribal-utility-management-march-30-april-3-2020-coachella-california/>

Native American Water Association - Available Trainings

The Native American Water Association provides tribal water and wastewater operators, managers, utility commissions and tribal leadership with training and technical assistance. For more information on the training events, please visit https://www.eventbrite.com/o/native-american-water-association-22061331832#live_events

- **Sustainable Management of Rural and Small Water Utilities**
February 25, 2020; Hollywood, FL
March 24, 2020; Sacramento, CA

Association of State Wetland Managers, Inc. Building Wetland Program Capacity in an Ever-changing Environment

April 7-9, 2020

Registration Fee: \$375 member/\$510 non-member
An annual meeting for state and tribal wetland program managers that will cover changes to Clean Water Act and how states and tribes need to re-evaluate their programs in order to protect state/tribal waters. Limited travel scholarships are available and the deadline to apply is March 6, 2020. For more information, please visit: <https://www.aswm.org/wetland-programs/state-wetland-programs/10209-2020-state-meeting>

Training Opportunity: Registration for the EPA's Water Quality Standards Academy Spring Sessions is Now Open

EPA's Water Quality Standards (WQS) Academy Spring sessions registration is now open. The WQS Academy provides WQS development and implementation information to WQS professionals associated with the federal, state, tribal and local agencies as well as the private sector. The EPA is offering two (2) sessions of the WQS Academy in the Washington, DC area, to take place on May 11-15, 2020 and May 18-22, 2020. Registration will close on March 11, 2020, or when capacity is reached. This is a joint registration for the spring WQSA sessions.

Please click here to register: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/us-epa-water-quality-standards-academy-may-11-15-2020-may-18-22-2020-registration-90324158991>.

Specific location information and daily logistics will be provided via email if your registration request is accepted. Please note that because seats in the course are very limited, the EPA reserves the right to accept registration requests based on a balanced mix of participants from different types of organizations to enhance the training and networking experience and will be assigning registrants to each session. Organizers are unable to guarantee selection into a specific session, you will have the opportunity to indicate on your registration form if you are unable to attend one of the sessions. You will be notified in writing by March 24, 2020 as to whether or not your registration request to attend the WQS Academy has been accepted and to which session, or whether you were placed on the waiting list.



Resources

USGS Climate Adaptation Science Centers: Planning for Habitat Connectivity in a Transboundary Region Webinar - March 26, 2020 (3:00 PM EST)

In this webinar, scientists and managers used conceptual models to understand and project a wide range of future impacts to habitat connectivity in the Pacific Northwest, and then identified a diverse set of possible adaptation responses to address habitat connectivity. Join this webinar to learn more about the researchers' key findings, data, and maps. Enhancing ecological connectivity - the degree to which landscapes facilitate the movement of the organisms within them - is a frequently recommended strategy for conserving wildlife populations into the future.

To register:

https://www.usgs.gov/centers/climate-adaptation-science-centers/science/upcoming-webinar-planning-habitat-connectivity-a?qt-science_center_objects=0#qt-science_center_objects

Tribal Climate Health Project

This is a national webinar training series on how to develop a climate change adaptation plan that addresses both environmental and human health impacts. The training provides tools, templates and other resources to help tribal environmental and health professionals.

- March 17, 2020 (10:00 AM – 11:30 AM MST)

For more information, visit <https://register.gotowebinar.com/register/8077001825854440972>

EPA Small Systems Monthly Webinar Series

- March 31, 2020: Drinking Water Regulations 101 and Best Practices for Training Utilities

For more information, visit <https://www.epa.gov/water-research/small-systems-monthly-webinar-series>

EPA Water Research Webinar Series

- April 29, 2020: Water Treatment Modeling Tools for Removing PFAS and other Organic Contaminants

For more information, visit <https://www.epa.gov/water-research/water-research-webinar-series>

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

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