



NATIONAL TRIBAL WATER COUNCIL

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Tribal PFAS Working Group Session at the 2022 Tribal Lands and Environment Forum



Page Hingst and Mark Junker at TLEF

The Tribal PFAS Working Group conducted a listening session at this year's ITEP Tribal Lands and Environment Forum (TLEF) on August 11, 2022, in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. The Tribal PFAS Working Group consists of members from five (5) tribal partnership groups – 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).

Page Hingst, co-lead of the Tribal PFAS Working Group, and Mark Junker, TWRSC chair, conducted a listening session with about 25 people in the audience and more than 50 people attending virtually. During the session, three questions were asked of the audience regarding PFAS. Below are the questions asked and a sample of responses from the audience. Based on the responses, it appears many people within tribal communities are still not fully aware of PFAS, what it is, its impacts, and

whether tribes should be concerned about its presence in water, land, air, subsistence foods, and wildlife.

Question 1. Does your tribe have a PFAS contamination issue?

- Yes – at least four respondents answered “yes”
- No – at least two respondents answered “no”
- Not sure – the remaining 10 respondents indicated they were “unsure” or “unknown,” or “don’t know”

Question 2. What are your main concerns about PFAS contamination?

- Health effects, health impacts, health risks
- Surface water, protecting water quality, drinking water (majority of the responses were water and health related)
- “We are worried it might get in our drinking water and wild rice waters”
- “As an emerging contaminant, how to respond in stabilization or cleanup”

Question 3. What are your main learning objectives for this course?

- “Gaining a working knowledge of PFAS”
- “Background info on PFAS to help us decide if we should be concerned”
- “To know what it is and what to watch for”
- “PFAS characteristics, exposure pathways, how others are addressing it”



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NEWSLETTER

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► 2022 TLEF: Tribal PFAS Working Group Session (*continued*)

In addition to the listening session, Page Hingst conducted other presentations related to PFAS. Below is a highlight of the two other presentations.



- *PFAS 101*: Page Hingst co-presented with Kaylene Ritter, Abt Associates, to provide a four-hour session on PFAS. The presentation included background and history of PFAS, contaminated PFAS sites, testing for PFAS, and options for PFAS remediation. During this session, participants were asked what their main concerns were regarding PFAS contamination. The top answers include health effects, water quality, and cleanup.
- *Illegal Dumpsites and PFAS*: Page Hingst provided tips and recommendations for conducting research and literature review. She presented on her findings when she was researching PFAS contamination that may be found at illegal dumpsites.

To access the recordings of the presentation: <https://mediaspace.nau.edu/channel/channelid/262157862?keyword=pfas&sortBy=relevance&categoryId=262157862>

The working group is currently developing fact sheets for tribal communities with the assistance of the PFAS Project Lab. The working group is collaborating with other organizations, such as Abt Associates, Environmental Working Group and the PFAS Project Lab. Ongoing activities and events of the working group will continue to be shared in upcoming NTWC newsletters.

► Updates & Announcements

Western Resource Advocates' Funding Opportunities for Tribal Water Priorities Guidebook

In August 2022, the Western Resource Advocates released a funding guidebook that identifies high-priority water needs common across numerous Indigenous communities and compiles the most relevant grants and programs available for specific categories of projects in the Colorado River Basin. The guidebook was developed in a user-friendly format to provide direction and answers for applicants. To access the guidebook: <https://westernresourceadvocates.org/publications/funding-opportunities-for-tribal-water-priorities/>

► Grant/Cooperative Agreement Opportunities

EPA Tribal Wetland Program Development Grants

Deadline: October 7, 2022

The Tribal Wetland Program Development Grants assist tribal government agencies and intertribal entities in developing or refining tribal programs which protect, manage, and restore wetlands.

The deadline to submit an application is October 7, 2022. For more information, please visit: <https://www.epa.gov/wetlands/tribal-wetland-program-development-grant-request-applications>



Tribal Consultation and Public Comment Opportunities

All consultation materials may be found at: <https://tcots.epa.gov>

EPA's Continued Consultation and Coordination on the Draft Clean Water Act Section 106 Tribal Grant Guidance

Deadline: October 14, 2022

On July 29, 2022, the EPA extended the comment period for the Draft Clean Water Act Section 106 Tribal Grants Guidance. The extension provides tribal partners with the opportunity to give substantial and meaningful feedback on the revised guidance.

The draft Section 106 Tribal Guidance reflects advances in tribal water quality programs over the last 15 years and provides tribes with more accurate, comprehensive, and up to date information to support tribal water quality programs. The draft includes:

- Updated grant, programmatic, and technical content
- Improved overall structure to reflect the natural program progression
- Added information on other EPA programs and topics
- Increased flexibility for meeting program requirements

The comment period ends on October 14, 2022. Comments may be submitted using an online response form, email, or letter. Consultation materials may be found at: <https://tcots.epa.gov/ords/tcotspub/f?p=106:5::1168::RR,2::>

For more information, please visit: <https://www.epa.gov/water-pollution-control-section-106-grants/draft-clean-water-act-section-106-tribal-grant-guidance>

EPA's Proposed Rulemaking to Designate PFOA and PFOS as Hazardous Substances under CERCLA

Deadline: November 7, 2022

U.S. EPA Office of Superfund Remediation and Technology Innovation in the Office of Land and Emergency Management initiated consultation and coordination with federally recognized Indian tribes on the notice of proposed rulemaking to designate perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA) and perfluorooctanesulfonic acid (PFOS) as hazardous substances under the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA). The prepublication version of the notice is now available on EPA's website at: <https://www.epa.gov/superfund/proposed-designation-perfluorooctanoic-acid-pfoa-and-perfluorooctanesulfonic-acid-pfos>.

These designations would require facilities across the country to report on PFOA and PFOS releases that meet or exceed the reportable quantity assigned to these substances. The hazardous substance designations would also enhance the ability of federal, tribal, state, and local authorities to obtain information regarding the location and extent of releases. EPA or other agencies could also seek cost recovery or contributions for costs incurred for the cleanup.

If you believe your tribe could be affected by this proposed action, EPA invites you to consult with EPA during this consultation period. To initiate government-to-government consultation with EPA, please contact Amanda Van Epps by phone at (202)-566-0995 or email at vanepps.amanda@epa.gov by October 7, 2022, to request the consultation.

The comment period ends on November 7, 2022. EPA will accept public comment on the Notice of Proposed Rulemaking at <https://www.regulations.gov>, Docket # EPA-HQOLEM-2019-0341. For more information about the proposed rule, please visit: <https://www.epa.gov/superfund/proposed-designation-perfluorooctanoic-acid-pfoaand-perfluorooctanesulfonic-acid-pfos>.



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, the following:

- Water Distribution Level 1: October 24-November 3, 2022
- Wastewater Collection Level 1: November 7-December 7, 2022

To register or to view the 2022 training schedule, please visit: <https://itcaonline.com/programs/environmental-quality-programs/tws-tmap/tws-training-events/>

American Water Works Association Webinars

- September 27, 2022: Leak Monitoring – More than Just “Nice to Have”
- September 29, 2022: Implications of U.S. EPA’s PFAS Health Advisories – Actions Steps for Impacted Water Suppliers

To register, please visit: <https://www.awwa.org/Events-Education/Webinars>

National Association of Wetland Managers Tribal Wetland Programs Webinars

- September 29, 2022: Getting Started with Tribal Wetland Plans

To register, please visit: <https://www.nawm.org/nawm/nawm-webinarscalls/4840-epa-region-10-tribal-wetland-training-webinars>

EPA Water Research Webinar Series

- October 11, 2022: Water Toxicity Sensor Challenge
- November 16, 2022: Real-time Risk Characterization Tool for Harmful Algal Bloom

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

EPA Tools and Resources Training Webinar Series

- October 13, 2022: Web-based Interspecies Correlation Estimation (Web-ICE) Application

To register, please visit: <https://www.epa.gov/research-states/epa-tools-and-resources-training-webinar-series>

EPA Small Drinking Water Systems Webinar Series

- October 25, 2022: PFAS

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

EPA Tools and Resources Webinar Series

October 26, 2022: Identifying Lead Service Lines in the Community

To register, please visit: <https://www.epa.gov/research-states/epa-tools-and-resources-webinar-series>



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

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