



## Highlights of NTWC Outreach and Information Exchange Activities

The National Tribal Water Council (NTWC) conducts outreach and information exchange throughout the year as part of its activities outlined in the 2023-2024 Tribal Water Priorities. Over the past few months, NTWC members were invited to provide presentations on various water topics. Below is a summary of this past quarter's outreach events where NTWC members participated.

### 2024 Clean Water Act Tribal Forum

The U.S. EPA Office of Water hosted the second Clean Water Act (CWA) Tribal Forum on May 14-15, 2024, at the National Museum of the American Indian in Washington, D.C. The CWA Tribal Forum focused on a more advanced understanding of the CWA authorities most relevant to Tribes, and the implementation of those authorities in Indian country.

NTWC members Ken Norton (NTWC Chair, R9), Nancy Schuldt (R5), and Yolanda Barney (Navajo Nation, R9) were invited to provide their knowledge and perspectives on CWA topics. Chair Norton provided opening remarks and presentations on the importance of tribal water quality standards, *Waters of the U.S.*, and CWA Section 401. Nancy Schuldt presented during the CWA Section 401 and Water Quality Standards sessions. Yolanda Barney provided an overview of the Navajo Nation's permitting program.



Ken Norton, NTWC Chair

### PFAS and Emerging Contaminants in Drinking Water Serving California Tribes

The Santa Clara University hosted a one-day conference on PFAS and emerging contaminants on May 30, 2024, in Santa Clara, California. This conference facilitated conversations between PFAS researchers, tribal community members, and policy advocates. Attendees learned about and discussed current research efforts and water quality data, tribal community member perspectives about how researchers can better support diverse community needs, and paths toward actionable research to support advocacy and policy change.

NTWC member Shaun Livermore (R4) was invited as a panelist for the *Tribal Perspectives and Priorities* panel. Shaun focused on the funding aspects of addressing emerging contaminants, the need for technical assistance when developing projects to address



Shaun Livermore,  
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## NTWC Outreach and Information Exchange *(continued)*

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water quality issues related to PFAS, and the tribal capacity needed to manage the projects. Shaun encouraged caution when adopting new treatment to address these contaminants because of long-term cost and potential technical difficulty of operating with new treatment in perpetuity.

### **National Tribal Caucus/EPA Climate Intensive: Office of Water and the National Tribal Water Council – Climate Priorities in the Water Program**

The National Tribal Caucus and EPA cohosted a four-day virtual training series from June 10-13, 2024. The training provided information on climate impacts, adaptation plans, vulnerability assessments, and funding opportunities. The EPA Office of Water and the National Tribal Water Council held a session focused on climate priorities in the water program.

NTWC Chair Norton shared general views and thoughts on climate change and its impacts on water. Climate change may impact water and aquatic resources through changes in water quality and temperature. It can change aquatic habitats and endanger fish and other aquatic species that are important to tribal lifeways. NTWC encourages tribes to develop adaptation and mitigation plans that are unique to their tribal culture and incorporate their own traditional ecological knowledge.

### **ITEP's Tribal Lands and Environment Forum (August 12-15, 2024)**

The National Tribal Water Council, along with the Tribal PFAS Working Group (TPWG), will continue to find opportunities for outreach and information exchange. On behalf of the Tribal PFAS Working Group, Page Hingst, TPWG co-lead, and Kaylene Ritter, TPWG partner, will be conducting a workshop titled “PFAS 101” at the 2024 Tribal Lands and Environment Forum on August 12, 2024, in Eugene, OR.

For past presentation recordings of NTWC and Tribal PFAS Working Group webinars, please visit <https://www7.nau.edu/itep/main/ntwc/> and <https://mediaspace.nau.edu/channels?keyword=ntwc>.

## UPDATES & ANNOUNCEMENTS

### **EPA Releases New Science-Based Recommendations to Help More States, Tribes, and Territories Reduce Exposure to PFAS in Fish**

On July 11, 2024, the EPA published updated recommendations for contaminants that Tribal, state, and territorial fish advisory programs should consider monitoring in locally caught fish to protect public health. The EPA's latest recommendations consist of two lists of fish tissue contaminants, both of which include several per- and polyfluorinated substances (PFAS). Please see the [press release](#) and [view the lists of contaminants to monitor](#) on the EPA's website.

### **EPA's Acute 6PPD-q and 6PPD Aquatic Life Screening Values for Freshwater**

On June 3, 2024, the EPA's Office of Water (OW) developed acute aquatic life screening values for two widely distributed rubber-tire associated compounds, 6PPD-Quinone (6PPD-q) and 6PPD. The screening values are based on the latest scientific knowledge about the short-term (acute) toxicity of 6PPD-q and 6PPD to aquatic organisms, including sensitive species like coho salmon, in freshwaters of the U.S. For more information, please visit: <https://www.epa.gov/wqc/aquatic-life-criteria-and-methods-toxics#acute>

## Updates & Announcements *(continued)*

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### ITEP's Tribal Lands and Environment Forum, August 12-15, 2024

The Institute for Tribal Environmental Professionals (ITEP) announced the 2024 Tribal Lands and Environment Forum to be held in Eugene, Oregon. This is the 14<sup>th</sup> annual forum for environmental professionals from Tribes, US EPA, state/local/federal agencies, and community organizations to meet, share knowledge and learn from one another on how to improve management, protection and restoration of Tribal lands. The registration fee is \$175 (in -person) and the deadline to register is July 29, 2024. For more information, please visit: <https://sites.google.com/view/tlef2024/home?authuser=0>

### ITEP's National Tribal & Indigenous Climate Conference, September 9-12, 2024

The Institute for Tribal Environmental Professionals (ITEP) announced the 2024 Biennial National Tribal and Indigenous Climate Conference (NTICC) to be held in Anchorage, Alaska.

ITEP works with a number of support programs including the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) Tribal Resilience Program. The NTICC invites relatives from tribal nations and Indigenous Peoples to attend, listen, learn and share the important work conducted to protect tribal cultures, non-human relatives and the environment. For additional information, please visit: [https://sites.google.com/view/nticc2024/home\\_1?authuser=0](https://sites.google.com/view/nticc2024/home_1?authuser=0)

### 21<sup>st</sup> Annual EPA Drinking Water Workshop, September 17-19, 2024

The EPA's Office of Research and Development and Office of Water in partnership with the Association of State Drinking Water Administrators (ASDWA) is hosting the 21<sup>st</sup> Annual EPA Drinking Water Workshop on September 17-19, 2024, in Cincinnati, OH. The workshop will focus on PFAS and lead (Pb) topics. It is being designed for government agencies responsible for drinking water regulations compliance and treatment technologies permitting. For this year, the workshop will only be open to Tribal, state, and territory agencies (within the United States) responsible for public water systems to optimize networking, increase engagement, and promote a shared learning experience. For more information, please visit: <https://www.epa.gov/water-research/21st-annual-epa-drinking-water-workshop-small-system-challenges-and-solutions#About>

### 2024 Tribal Exchange Network Conference, October 16-17, 2024

The [TENC24](#) aims to expand Tribal capacity for environmental data sharing, management, and analysis through informational, interactive sessions that foster connection and collaboration opportunities, and strengthen Tribal participation in the Exchange Network. The Tribal Exchange Network will be hosting its conference titled "Tribal Data: Sharing Stories, Supporting the Future" on October 16-17, 2024, in Spokane, Washington.

The [Tribal Exchange Network Group \(TXG\)](#) and the [Institute for Tribal Environmental Professionals \(ITEP\)](#) host this FREE event for Tribal staff and other partners working with environmental data, particularly those seeking to leverage information technology solutions to streamline their work and enhance data management capacity. Others who may benefit from attending include those serving in Tribal leadership roles, Tribal staff developing and/or supporting information technology (IT) tools or systems, and other collaborators.

Sessions will be conducted in-person at the Northern Quest Resort in Spokane, WA and online through Zoom Events. **For more information contact** [NEIEN@nau.edu](mailto:NEIEN@nau.edu).



Have a story, idea, or update to share?  
Email us at [elaina.doral@nau.edu](mailto:elaina.doral@nau.edu).





## Membership Recruitment for Region 6 and Region 7 Representatives

The National Tribal Water Council is a technical and scientific body established to advocate for the best interests of federally-recognized Indian and Alaska Native Tribes in matters pertaining to water. The Council is currently accepting applications from tribal water professionals to fill two open positions.

### Region 6 Representative

**Applications accepted until July 31, 2024**

This position is open to tribal water professionals employed by a federally recognized Tribe or tribally authorized organization from Region 6 (Arkansas, Louisiana, New Mexico, Oklahoma, and Texas).

### Region 7 Representative

**Applications accepted until August 15, 2024**

This position is open to tribal water professionals employed by a federally recognized Tribe or tribally authorized organization from Region 7 (Iowa, Kansas, Missouri, and Nebraska).

### Member duties include, but not limited, to:

- Participating in monthly virtual calls;
- Attending semi-annual in-person meetings; and
- Creating and participating in crafting response documents to policy and/or rulemaking actions.

We are seeking individuals that are passionate and vocal about tribal water issues. Interested applicants must submit the following: application form, letter of interest, and professional resumé. Please refer to the Council's [membership application information packet](#) for additional details.

To express your interest or obtain more information, please contact Elaine Wilson at [elaine.wilson@nau.edu](mailto:elaine.wilson@nau.edu).





# TRIBAL CONSULTATION OPPORTUNITIES

## Implementation of the Indian Reservation Drinking Water Program

**Deadline: July 22, 2024**

EPA initiated consultation and coordination with federally recognized Indian Tribes to inform implementation of the new Indian Reservation Drinking Water Program. The Indian Reservation Drinking Water Program will fund projects on reservations that serve federally recognized Indian Tribes, with 50% of the available funds required for use for projects in the Upper Missouri River Basin, Upper Rio Grande River Basin, Columbia River Basin, Lower Colorado River Basin, and Arkansas-White River Basin. Projects for this program are to focus on improving water quality, water pressure, water services, sanitation, or wastewater services on Indian reservations. The deadline to submit a comment is July 22, 2024. Consultation materials are available on EPA's Tribal Consultation Opportunities Tracking System (TCOTS) website located at: <https://tcots.epa.gov>.

## Proposed Restructuring of the National Tribal Caucus (NTC) Under the Federal Advisory Committee Act

**Deadline: August 9, 2024**

The U.S. EPA has proposed to restructure the National Tribal Caucus (NTC) as a Federal Advisory Committee (FAC) under the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA) to increase the proportion of elected or traditionally appointed Tribal leaders that serve on the group.

In conjunction with this proposal, EPA is reviewing the characteristics of the NTC to strengthen the operations of the group and increase collaboration with the other EPA Tribal Partnership Groups. These proposed changes will clarify the process by which EPA receives Tribal leadership recommendations on technical programs and budget planning, elevate the NTC as the preeminent group of Tribal representatives that provides advice directly to EPA leadership on items of national significance under EPA's purview, and strengthen EPA's ongoing commitment to collaboration and partnership with Tribes and the government-to-government relationship. This proposal reflects the commitment of the EPA to engage directly with Tribal leaders and ensures that Tribal leaders engage at the highest levels of the Agency on environmental issues that impact Indigenous communities.

Learn more about the current NTC, including the current 2012 Charter on the [NTC website](#). Also, learn more about the Federal Advisory Committee Act on [EPA's FACA website](#). The deadline to submit a comment is August 9, 2024. Consultation materials are available on EPA's Tribal Consultation Opportunities Tracking System (TCOTS) website located at: <https://tcots.epa.gov>.

## EPA Determines that Alaska's Water Quality Standards Need to be Updated Based on More Accurate Fish Consumption Rates to Protect Communities from Toxic Pollution

**Deadline: August 09, 2024**

On June 5, 2024, the EPA issued an Administrator's Determination that new and revised water quality standards for Alaska are needed to protect the health of Alaska residents. The EPA's Determination is an important step towards ensuring that Alaska's human health criteria are informed by science and reflect the needs of Alaska residents. Though the Determination does not prevent and should not discourage the state of Alaska from adopting and submitting its own rule to address the Determination, the EPA is prepared to put revised standards in place for Alaska if the state does not take sufficient steps to do so. Therefore, the EPA is inviting government-to-government consultation and coordination with federally recognized Tribes in Alaska so that we can fully consider Tribal interests as we prepare to potentially evaluate a state water quality standards submission and/or proceed with a federal rulemaking process. The EPA's action applies only to water bodies under the jurisdiction of the state of Alaska and does not apply to waters that are within Indian Country, as defined in 18 U.S.C. § 1151. <https://www.epa.gov/wqs-tech/federally-promulgated-water-quality-standards-specific-states-territories-and-tribes>

## Tribal Consultation Opportunities *(continued)*

### WHCNAA Tribal Leader Consultation on Improving Mining on Public Lands

**Deadline: August 31, 2024**

The White House Council on Native American Affairs (WHCNAA), in conjunction with the U.S. Department of the Interior (DOI) and Department of Energy (DOE), will conduct four (4) Tribal Leader Consultations regarding the September 2023 [Recommendations to Improve Mining on Public Lands](#) report. Materials for a consultation letter summarizing the recommendations and a copy of the 2023 report were sent by email. You can submit written comments to [whcnaa@bia.gov](mailto:whcnaa@bia.gov). **Written comments are requested by August 31, 2024.** Additional information can be found here: <https://www.bia.gov/tribal-critical-minerals-initiative>.

## EVENTS & 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 online, in-person, and blended trainings.

Upcoming courses include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Wastewater Math: September 17-26, 2024 (Virtual)
- Wastewater Lagoons: October 8-18, 2024 (Blended)

To register or to view the 2024 training schedule, please visit: <https://itcaonline.com/programs/environmental-quality-programs/tws-tmap/tws-training-events/>

### EPA Water Utility Resilience Trainings

- July 17, 2024: Cybersecurity Refresher Webinar

To register: <https://www.epa.gov/waterresiliencetraining/register-epa-water-utility-resilience-trainings>

### EPA Small Drinking Water Systems Webinar Series

- July 30, 2024: Drinking Water System Resilience

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

### EPA Tools and Resources Webinar Series

- July 17, 2024: Temperature, Precipitation, and Beyond – Introducing Datasets Suitable for Comprehensive Analysis of Local Climate Change Impacts

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

### EPA Environmental Justice Webinar Series for Tribes and Indigenous Peoples

- July 31, 2024

To register: <https://www.epa.gov/environmentaljustice/environmental-justice-tribes-and-indigenous-peoples#webinars>

### Native American Fish & Wildlife Society Events & Training

- August 20, 2024: How to Integrate Wildlife Concerns into the Transportation Process

To register: <https://www.nafws.org/events-training/>

# NTWC MEMBERS

For more information on our members, visit [Meet the Council](#).

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