***TAMS Steering Committee Call Notes***

**January 20, 2021 @ 10AM PDT**

Attending: Christal Black, Chuck Buckler, Tennille Denetdeel, Tim Hanley, Lori Howell, Carma Huseby, Josie Kamkoff, Amanda Kapp, Mehrdad Khatibi, Mike King, Chris Lee, Angelique Luedeker, James Payne, Camille QuickBear, Tanda Roberts, Melinda Ronca-Battista, Darlene Santos

**Opening Business**

Roll Call was completed, and there was a quorum of voting members.

The agendawas approved.

The December call notes were not ready for approval.

**Recommendations from the GAO Report** – James Payne and Tim Hanley, OAQPS

* On December 7th, 2020 the GAO Released a report: “Air Pollution” Opportunities to Better Sustain and Modernize the National Air Quality Monitoring System.” [https://www.gao.gov/products/GAO-21-38](https://gcc01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.gao.gov%2Fproducts%2FGAO-21-38&data=04%7C01%7CHanley.Tim%40epa.gov%7C1d1b1d06ea454daa95db08d8bcc26e77%7C88b378b367484867acf976aacbeca6a7%7C0%7C0%7C637466890556025231%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C1000&sdata=q7cZZ08nVHXzg8N38kHNHEhMXSPLIK%2FOYf%2BIzddxCKE%3D&reserved=0)
* The report is approximately 83 pages long with appendices and EPA’s response.   The EPA response is in Appendix IV of the report.
* Prior to publishing the report, the GAO worked closely with officials from EPA and selected state and local agencies (since the audit began in March 2018) to identify challenges related to sustaining the monitoring system.
* GAO is making two recommendations for EPA to:

(1) establish an asset management framework for the monitoring system that includes key characteristics, and

(2) develop an air quality monitoring modernization plan that aligns with leading practices such as establishing modernization goals and roles, assessing risks to modernization success, identifying resources needed to achieve modernization goals, and measuring and evaluating progress.

* In written comments on the report, EPA generally agreed with the recommendations. However, we want to work closely with our state, local, and tribal air agency partners and to solicit input on what they need to ensure success and be clear that full implementation of the recommendations would require additional resources.
* Next steps: We owe a response to OCFO by early February that includes a short implementation plan. After that we will begin reaching out again to all stakeholders, including Tribes through the TAMS and NTAA to start formulating plans to address both of the recommendations.  We welcome input on each of these.

Other Comments/Discussions:

* Impacts of dust such as from a superfund site.  We don’t usually have the data for a risk assessment as there is a lack of this kind of information in Indian Country.
* As Tribes are Governmental agencies, they should have the ability to use FRMs so that data may be used to address a range of different issues. Sensors have a value but they should not be a substitute for FRMs.
* There have been efforts in the past to address aging equipment needs in Indian Country and these efforts have resulted in a status of equipment used in reports by groups such as the NTAA.  This is an issue to Tribes since there is sometimes funds for existing operation/maintenance, but there is often no funds to support replacement of equipment.
* Air quality managers need additional information; air toxic needs; wildfires and low cost sensors
* Different strategies over the years; major restructuring
* EPA faces challenges; how do we establish programs
* Develop and improve air quality monitoring strategic plans
* Integrating modern technologies; sensors, etc.
* Intending to put budget initiative together; available money is done deal until congress approves
* How do we put money to use in most effective way
* Front end of implementing; 3-4 yr impact; defining needs; building consensus; funding; putting funding to work; address high priorities
* There is a lack of data and monitoring in tribal communities; effects other programs; can highlight; tribal specific
* Needs to go through risk assessment; keep bringing up issues
* TAMS staff will make effort to get comments together and share/provide input from SC members; based on comments over the years
* Ways to collectively help tribes succeed
* Call next week with NTAA; state and local agency leadership
* Refer to Appendix 4 of report

**TAMS Center Update** – Chris Lee and Hayden Hardie

Courses/Webinars – **Christal Black, ITEP Program Coordinator**

* Review of schedule
* Has there been increase of participation with online and cohorts
* Hosted 8 online; 2 cohorts (16) (18) completed; 12 webinars
* Reached out to 906 individuals in 6 months; 800 attendees of webinars
* Typical year in-person trainings; approx. 15-20 attendees per course; in total we reach about 300 participants; able to reach out to more people
* Not just tribes; EPA and regional folks
* Demanding; staff learning and adapting on the fly
* Mindful of timing; schedule will change; a lot of work especially with upcoming NTF

Staff Activity:

- Angelique Luedeker

* Putting together spreadsheets to assist with calculating non-point emissions; wagon wheel tool used; EPA state and counties use to estimate
* February 16 webinar will focus on spreadsheets
* 2021 submittal year for NEI: tri-annual EI 2017 was last submittal
* For large sources; important to submit data into NEI so not underrepresenting; used for modeling purposes
* Can assist with getting data in NEI

- Josie Kamkoff

* Building warm climate: designed it; videos completed; upload in scholar LMS and get running; designed to be simple
* Region 10 outreach event; leaders in agency; demo to apply for US jobs
* Gave tribal students instructions to apply for internship; etc.
* Quality Assurance host site applications are in
* QAPP; fundamentals and writing course; one on one communication; listen to concern and provide information; QAPP needs how to approve faster; Fort Independence to provide presentation in RTOC
* IAQ Alaska webinar to be rescheduled in the Spring
* Monitoring QAPP work

- Mike King

* Continue PA support to Fallon Shoshone-Paiute and HoChunk Tribes; working on webinar Intro to AQS database and working with OAQPS presenters; dataloggers tentative for NTFAQ

- Melinda Ronca-Battista

* Writing SOPs for QREST; EPA to review; laying out step by step how to use different features in QREST; easy to adopt and modify; has AQS node
* Webinar next Tuesday; introduce features of QREST
* Help data management in tribal agencies

**TAMS 20 Yr Anniversary Video** – Amanda Kapp

* **1 member of the TAMS team and 1 external person** knowledgeable about the history of TAMS, the relationship between TAMS and the Clean Air Act (CAA) and the overall gains Tribes have made in air monitoring over the past 20 years.
  + **Sample questions:**
    - What is the TAMS Center and why was it created?
    - How has the TAMS Center worked with Tribes?
    - What types of support does TAMS offer? Include inventory development, QAPP development, and data management.
    - Why is the 50 Yrs of the CAA significant and what is the connection to Tribes?
    - How did the 1990 amendment to the CAA affect Tribes and TAMS?
  + Possible TAMS Interviewees:
    - Randy Ashley:
      * He was at the original ground breaking ceremony and still works on tribal air quality for his Tribe (Salish Kootenai).
    - Jim Woods:
      * He is a former member of TAMS SC and has a long history with the program (Makah).
    - Farshid Farsi
    - Current member of TAMS SC
  + Possible External Interviewees:
    - Pat Childress
    - Dave Rowsen
    - Darryl Harmon
    - Jed Harrison
    - Ed Wilds
    - Andrea Stafford
    - Bill Auberle
* **1-2 people** who can talk about the support their Tribe received from TAMS and how that support helped the Tribe develop their air programs.
  + **Sample questions:**
    - How has your Tribal program benefited from the technical assistance you received from TAMS?
    - What impact do you think TAMS has had in improving air quality over the years?
  + Possible Interviews
  + Mary Fauci, Nez Perce tribe
  + Bill Thompson, Penobscot Nation
  + Brandy Toft, Leech Lake
  + Scott Hanson, Catawba
  + Randy Ashley, Confederated Salish & Kootenai Tribes
* **1 person** who might be willing to share a personal interest story about how their Tribe’s air program has improved their life (or the life of someone in their family)
  + **Sample questions:**
    - What issue does your Tribe’s air monitoring problem help you (or your family member) with?
    - How did poor air quality affect you (or your family member) before the monitoring program started?
    - How do you use the information from the air monitoring program?
  + Possible Interviews
    - Fort McDowell Yavapai Nation: Karen Shaw, air quality program manager
    - Nez Perce: used the air toxics program monitors to participate in a study around the pulp mill in the area
    - Southern Ute: did some interesting work with the gas fields and Morongo found an arsenic issue they weren’t aware of.
    - TAMS supported a study on the uranium mine spill in Navajo Nation and a Ozone monitoring project for the Southern California tribes.
    - Hopi:  monitoring project
* Would **Ann Marie**, **Mehrdad** or a **member of the TAMS SC** like to make a statement?
* Is there **anyone else** who needs to be included/represented in the video?
* Review and send input to Amanda by end of month

**TAMS Needs Assessment** – Chris Lee

* Notice sent out on TAMS and NTAA listserv
* Technical issues with online form; time out error; addressing issue and will send update

Submitted by:

Darlene Santos