



Earth Day Every Day

By Debbie Dotson, Water Quality Officer, Eastern Shawnee Tribe of Oklahoma

Our Environmental Department is a mystery to many people who have no idea what we really do. We have a recycle center, greenhouses, water quality monitoring and pollution prevention programs, drinking water and wastewater management, and land management under the umbrella of Environmental, so we are busy but not always noticed. We become more visible at our annual outreach events. We have an annual Kids Fishing Derby, Lost Creek Water Festival, Tire Collection Event, and most recently, we added Earth Day to our list of activities hosted by the Environmental Department.

People around the world celebrate Earth Day on April 22 each year with activities like planting trees and flowers, cleaning up communities, and recycling. The Eastern Shawnee Tribe's Environmental Department participates in earth-friendly activities in daily work and provides educational activities several times a year to promote a healthier environment. Chief Glenna Wallace

challenged our department to put together a new community event in 2024, an Earth Day event to combine our regular work with a fun way to promote protecting the environment.



Other tribal departments were invited to participate and host stations in an open grassy area close to the tribe's Eastern Shawnee Early Childhood Learning Center (ECLC) and next to the Community Building where the elders gather for lunch. The event included a rain barrel raffle, snow cones and popcorn, a recycle sorting activity, seed and plant giveaways, a flowerpot painting station, soil painting, and tree circle crafts. A surprise visit from Flo the Water Drop was a big hit with the kids.

Planning started earlier for our 2025 Earth Day event. The rain barrel raffle in 2024 was so popular that a rain barrel workshop is added as a part of our 2025 event, with 25 rain barrels to give away this time, all donated. I invited a local public preschool in addition to our



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NEWSLETTER

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<https://nau.edu/ntwc>

Earth Day Every Day *(continued)*

ECLC, so we are expecting lots of 4–5-year-olds. The event is open to the public, promoted with flyers in our tribal newsletter and website, emailed to employees, and posted at tribal businesses.

Indigenous people have been stewards of the earth from time immemorial, celebrating the land, water, and living things in ways that are practical and sacred. Chief Wallace tells of Shawnee tradition in gathering was to always leave the fourth one. Pick three and leave the fourth to keep growing and to have something for the future, respecting the things that sustain life. We hope that people, especially the kids, remember something from our events about good stewardship--why we protect water; why we reuse, reduce, and recycle; and why we keep planting and leave the fourth one for the future harvest.



2024 Earth Day Events, including a rain barrel workshop (Photos courtesy of Debbie Dotson)

EARTH DAY APRIL 22

PROTECTING OUR PLANET STARTS WITH YOU

| | | | |
|---|---|--|---|
| <p>BIKE MORE DRIVE LESS</p> <p>EDUCATE</p> <p>When you further your own education, you can help others understand the importance and value of our natural resources.</p> <p>Volunteer!</p> <p>Volunteer for cleanups in your community. You can get involved in protecting your watershed too!</p> | <p>reduce REUSE recycle</p> <p>Cut down on what you throw away. Follow the three "R's" to conserve natural resources and landfill space.</p> | <p>choose sustainable</p> <p>seafood</p> <p>Learn how to make smart seafood choices at www.FishWatch.gov.</p> | <p>Trees provide food and oxygen. They help save energy, clean the air, and help combat climate change.</p> <p>PLANT A TREE</p> |
| <p>CONSERVE WATER</p> <p>The less water you use, the less runoff and wastewater that eventually end up in the ocean.</p> | <p>-SHOP- WISELY</p> <p>Buy less plastic and bring a reusable shopping bag.</p> | <p>Don't send chemicals into our waterways.</p> <p>Choose nontoxic chemicals in the home and office.</p> | <p>Long-lasting light bulbs - ARE A - BRIGHT IDEA</p> <p>Energy efficient light bulbs reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Also flip the light switch off when you leave the room!</p> |

oceanservice.noaa.gov

Earth Day resources: <https://www.earthday.org/>
<https://www.epa.gov/earthday>
<https://www.noaa.gov/earth-day>

MEMBERSHIP RECRUITMENT

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 employed by a federally recognized Tribe or tribally authorized organization.

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.

To express your interest or obtain more information, please contact Elaine Wilson at elaine.wilson@nau.edu.



ACCEPTING APPLICATIONS UNTIL
THE POSITION IS FILLED.

Review of Applications will begin on
May 10, 2025.

AT-LARGE

Tribal water professional within
Regions 1 through 10.

We are seeking individuals with a
background in water infrastructure,
drinking water, wastewater, and
operations and maintenance.



SCAN HERE for the application
or visit: <https://www7.nau.edu/itep/main/ntwc/>

UPDATES & ANNOUNCEMENTS

2025 Tribal Drinking Water Conference, April 21-24, 2025

The Rural Community Assistance Corporation and U.S. Environmental Protection Agency are hosting the 2025 Tribal Drinking Water Conference on April 21-25, 2025, in Reno, Nevada. Ensuring both the quality and ample supply of drinking water is a multifaceted duty. Tribal Utilities must possess financial stability, managerial competence, and technical expertise to meet immediate water needs while safeguarding community health sustainably. Join the EPA and RCAC to expand your skills, gain insights, earn contact hours, network, and enjoy engaging activities. For more information, please visit: <https://www.rcac.org/trainings/2025-tribal-drinking-water-conference/>

Native American Water Association Informative Session on PFAS Substances, April 23, 2025

Join us for an informative session on PFAS Substances at the Embassy Suites by Hilton Albuquerque. Learn about the basics of PFAS, their impact on the environment, and how to address them. This in-person event is a fantastic opportunity to expand your knowledge and connect with others interested in this topic. Do not miss this chance to deepen your understanding of PFAS substances!

April 23, 2025: PFAS Substances 101, Albuquerque, NM (Registration fee \$231.66)

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/pfas-substances-101-tickets-1294883213549?aff=ebdsoporgprofile>

2025 Native American Fish and Wildlife Society Annual National Conference, May 12-15, 2025

The 2025 Native American Fish and Wildlife Society Annual National Conference, being hosted by the Eastern Shoshone and Northern Arapaho Tribes of the Wind River Reservation, will be held from May 12-15, 2025, in Riverton, Wyoming. The registration fee for non-members is \$600. For more information, please visit: <https://www.nafws.org/product/2025-annual-national-conference/>

EPA Region 9 2025 Tribal Clean Water Act Workshop, May 19-23, 2025

Workshop co-sponsors EPA Region 9 and the Fallon Paiute-Shoshone Tribe are inviting Tribal water quality/resource staff to attend the EPA Region 9 2025 Tribal Clean Water Act (CWA) Workshop in Fallon, Nevada, also known as “the Oasis of Nevada.” Attendees will gather in-person to share knowledge, resources, and experiences to better implement Tribal CWA programs and to protect Tribal water resources for future generations. For more information, please visit: <https://www.epa.gov/tribal-pacific-sw/r9-2025-tribal-cwa-workshop>

GRANT OPPORTUNITY

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service FY 2025 Tribal Wildlife Grant

Deadline: June 20, 2025

The Tribal Wildlife Grants Program provides technical and financial assistance to federally recognized Tribes for the development and implementation of programs that benefit fish and wildlife and their habitats. Funding may be used for conserving any plant or animal species of interest to a Tribe, including those of Native American cultural or traditional importance. Activities may include, but are not limited to:

- planning for wildlife and habitat conservation
- fish and wildlife conservation and management actions
- fish and wildlife related laboratory and field research
- habitat preservation

For more information, please visit: <https://www.fws.gov/service/tribal-wildlife-grants>

TRIBAL CONSULTATION OPPORTUNITIES

EPA's Draft Sewage Sludge Risk Assessment for PFOA and PFOS

Deadline Extended: April 16, 2025

The EPA released the Draft Sewage Sludge Risk Assessment for Perfluorooctanoic Acid (PFOA) and Perfluorooctane Sulfonic Acid (PFOS) for public comment. The draft risk assessment reflects the agency's latest scientific understanding of the potential risks to human health and the environment posed by the presence of [PFOA and PFOS in sewage sludge](#) that is land applied as a soil conditioner or fertilizer (on agricultural, forested, and other lands), surface disposed (e.g., placed in a sewage sludge-only landfill called a monofill), or incinerated. The EPA will accept written comments on the draft risk assessment through April 16, 2025, via Regulations.gov (Docket ID no. EPA-HQ-OW-2024-0504). For more information, please visit: <https://www.epa.gov/biosolids/draft-sewage-sludge-risk-assessment-perfluorooctanoic-acid-pfoa-and-perfluorooctane>

EPA's Draft National Recommended Water Quality Criteria for the Protection of Human Health for PFOA, PFOS, and PFBS

Deadline Extended: April 25, 2025

The EPA has released draft national recommended health-based levels (human health criteria) for three per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) in water bodies. The three PFAS are perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA), perfluorooctane sulfonic acid (PFOS), and perfluorobutane sulfonic acid (PFBS). Human health criteria are not legally enforceable, rather they are information for local entities to consider when making local decisions about water quality. The EPA will accept written comments on the draft human health criteria until April 25, 2025.

Section 304(a) of the Clean Water Act (CWA) directs the EPA to develop and publish water quality criteria that accurately reflect the latest scientific knowledge about the effects of particular pollutants on human health and welfare. The EPA's CWA Section 304(a) human health criteria are recommendations to states and Tribes authorized to establish their own water quality standards under the CWA. Once final, these recommended criteria can be used by states and authorized Tribes to develop their own water quality criteria that help protect people from exposure through consuming water, fish and shellfish from inland and nearshore water bodies that may be contaminated by any of these PFAS. For more information: <https://www.epa.gov/wqc/human-health-water-quality-criteria-pfas>

Upcoming Efforts to Revise the Definition of "Waters of the United States"

Deadline: May 20, 2025

The EPA and the U.S. Department of the Army initiated consultation with federally recognized Indian Tribes on certain key topics related to the implementation of the definition of "waters of the United States." On March 12, 2025, the agencies announced their intent to undertake a rulemaking to revise this definition in light of the Supreme Court's decision in *Sackett v. Environmental Protection Agency*, 598 U.S. 651 (2023) with a focus on clarity, simplicity and improvements that will stand the test of time.

The agencies seek the participation of Tribes and their representative associations in the upcoming Tribal listening session and invite your written input for the recommendations docket, Docket ID No. EPA-HQ-OW-2025-0093. You are welcome to participate in the listening sessions for the public. The Federal Register [notice](#) announcing a series of listening sessions and a 30-day written recommendations docket ID No. EPA-HQ-OW-2025-0093 <https://www.regulations.gov/> is available on the [EPA's website](#). The recommendations docket closes April 23, 2025. The agencies specifically seek feedback on the following:

- Defining "continuous surface connection," including what it means to "abut" a jurisdictional water.
- Defining "relatively permanent" and identifying relatively permanent tributaries in the field; and
- Which characteristics can provide clear and implementable distinctions between jurisdictional and non-jurisdictional ditches.

Tribal Consultation Opportunities (*continued*)

Tribal Listening Session

April 30, 2025, 1:00-3:00 p.m. EDT

[Registration](#) link

Tribes may submit written consultation comments at any time during the Tribal consultation and coordination process via email to CWAwotus@epa.gov. If you would like to request government-to-government consultation with the agencies on this action, please have your staff contact Laura Shumway at CWAwotus@epa.gov and Elliott Carman, Water Resources Regulation and Policy Advisor, at elliott.n.carman.civ@army.mil by May 20, 2025. The EPA and the Army would like to conclude consultation meetings by June 2, 2025.

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

- General Module & Very Small Water Systems (Blended): May 5-16, 2025

To register or to view the 2025 training schedule, please visit: <https://itcaonline.com/programs/environmental-quality-programs/tws-tmap/tws-training-events/>

EPA Tools and Resources Webinar Series

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

- April 16, 2025: Detection and Forecasting of Harmful Algal Blooms
- May 21, 2025: Wildfires

EPA Small Drinking Water Systems Webinar Series

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

- April 29, 2025: Lead Chemistry, Communication, and Local Engagement

USGS Friday Findings Webinar Series

To register: <https://www.usgs.gov/news/webinar-series-fridays-findings>

- April 11, 2025: From Tread to Watershed: 6 PPD and 6 PPD-Quinone Analysis, Sample Handling, and Reconnaissance of United States Stream Exposures
- April 25: Wildlife Health Awareness Day – Marine, Terrestrial, and Fish

Native American Fish and Wildlife Society

To register: <https://www.nafws.org/product/tribal-wildlife-grants-twg-funding-opportunity/>

- April 29, 2025: Tribal Wildlife Grants Funding Opportunity

Contaminated Site Clean-Up Information Training & Events

To register: <https://clu-in.org/training/>

- April 24, 2025: PFAS Beyond the Basics – PFAS Fate and Transport, Site Characterization and Source ID Training
- April 30, 2025: Groundwater Modeling and Complexity of PFAS Modeling
- May 1, 2025: Overview of the Tire-Derived Chemicals 6PPD & 6 PPD-quinone

NTWC MEMBERS

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

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