

**National Tribal Water Council and EPA Monthly Conference Call**  
**Wednesday, March 11, 2026**  
**2:00 – 3:30 P.M. (ET)**

**CALL SUMMARY**

**I. Introductions** (Elaine Wilson, ITEP)

**NTWC:** Ken Norton (R9, Chair); Chauncey Means (R8, Vice Chair); Dan Kusneirz (R1); Brian Patterson (R2); Rainee Tetreault (R4); Debbie Dotson (R6); Joshua Jojola (R6, At-Large); Kayla Vondracek (R7); Scott Hauser (R10, At-Large); Ann Wyatt (R10, Alaska); Mary Verner (R10)

**EPA:** Holly Galavotti; Daniel Consigli; Danielle Anderson; Matthew Floyd; Karen Gude; Rory Hytrek; Laura Montoya; James Ray; Matthew Richardson; Teagan Rostock; Margot Buckelew; Erica Fleisig

**ITEP:** Elaine Wilson; Elaina Doral

**II. NTWC Updates** (Ken Norton, NTWC)

• **CWA Rulemaking Initiatives**

NTWC submitted comments to both proposed rulemakings for CWA 401 Water Quality Certification and “Waters of the United States.” NTWC is watching for updates on the rulemakings and the finalization for both rules. NTWC discussed the EPA’s withdrawal of the Tribal Reserved Rights Rule. NTWC plans to develop a comment letter after the notification for tribal consultation is released.

• **Strategies for Tribal Water Protection**

NTWC is seeking other regulatory actions that Tribes may use to protect their waters. This includes the strategy for petitioning the EPA Administrator for promulgating water quality standards, similar to the [Colville Confederated Tribes](#) in 1989. Furthermore, NTWC plans to discuss CWA Section 303(c)(4) as another strategy. NTWC seeks to reinvigorate the Tribal Baseline Water Quality Standards Rule and plans to discuss these strategies during the upcoming spring meeting.

• **2026 Spring Meeting**

Travel logistics for the spring meeting was discussed. Additionally, suggestions were provided for possible locations for the fall meeting.

**III. EPA Office of Water** (Holly Galavotti, OW)

• **NTWC Spring Meeting Agenda**

Holly Galavotti shared the tentative agenda for the spring meeting. The meeting is scheduled for May 6-7, 2026, at the William D. Ruckelshaus Conference Center in Washington, D.C. The first day will include opening remarks from Chairman Norton and EPA leadership. Presentations will include funding, technical assistance, EPA Office of Water program updates, and regulatory updates. The second day will include an NTWC business session and roundtable. Presentations will include mining issues, water reuse programs, and data centers.

**Questions/Comments**

Chairman Norton requested to include proper consultation to the agenda considering the recent 30-day consultation process. NTWC considers the 30-day consultation period inadequate. NTWC

and the National Tribal Caucus did submit letters of request to extend the comment deadline for both the CWA 401 and WOTUS.

Eric Morrison requested to add the issue of oil rigs dumping untreated water into the Cook Inlet as part of the mining session.

Chairman Norton brought up the issue of removing federal mining protections for the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness in Minnesota, which includes ceded lands of the Chippewa.

**IV. Workgroup Updates (if any)**

- [Hypoxia Task Force](#) (Deborah Dotson and Kayla Vondracek, *interim*)
- **National Water Quality Monitoring Council** (Rainee Tetreault)
- **Water Quality Standards Management Association** (Yolanda Barney)
- **Tribal PFAS Working Group** (Elaine Wilson, Shaun Livermore, Dan Kusnierz)
  - 2 presentations for March and April
  - National PFAS Conference in June 8-10, 2026, in Tucson, AZ. Elaine Wilson will attend.

**V. Consultation Opportunities/Announcements**

**VI. Closing** (Ken Norton, Chauncey Means, NTWC)

**VII. NTWC's next monthly call, April 8, 2026**

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**Announcements/Upcoming Meetings:**

**EPA Path Forward on 2024 Tribal Reserved Rights Rule**

The agency has reviewed the 2024 Tribal Reserved Rights Rule in the context of ongoing litigation brought by 12 states in the U.S. District Court for the District of North Dakota. EPA agrees with these states that the agency lacked statutory authority under the Clean Water Act to promulgate this rule. In a March 6, 2026, filing with the court, the agency announced its intent to develop a proposed action that would rescind the 2024 rule. EPA will conduct Tribal consultation and seek public comment on this forthcoming proposal. Input received will inform a final action. For more information visit: <https://www.epa.gov/wqs-tech/revising-federal-water-quality-standards-regulation-protect-tribal-reserved-rights>

**EPA Seeking Nominations for the National Drinking Water Advisory Council**

On March 9, 2026, EPA published a [notice in the Federal Register](#) seeking nominations of qualified candidates to be considered for an appointment to the National Drinking Water Advisory Council (NDWAC). EPA is seeking nominations of candidates from the general public; states and local governments concerned with water hygiene and public water supply; and representatives of private organizations or groups demonstrating an active interest in the field of water hygiene and public water supply. EPA may also consider nominations received through this solicitation to fill any additional or anticipated vacancies on the Council through the end of 2026. The notice is open through 04/08/2026. Visit the [Federal Register](#) to submit a nomination. Learn more about NDWAC at <https://www.epa.gov/ndwac>

### **RealWaterTA**

On March 4, 2026, OW announced RealWaterTA - to refocus and rebrand EPA's technical assistance work going forward. In a memo, OW AA Kramer, provides direction on how technical assistance supported by the agency will be provided to water systems to ensure efficient and appropriate use of taxpayer dollars and delivery of real compliance and infrastructure improvements to benefit Americans across the nation. EPA's new [RealWaterTA](#) initiative will better serve water systems and state partners, and keep funds moving smoothly through a back-to-basics approach focusing on proven, best-practice technical assistance methods. The goal of RealWaterTA is to directly assist more water systems to reliably provide safe drinking water and effectively treat wastewater over the long term. Within this overarching goal, the Office of Water expects this back-to-basics approach to benefit small, rural and tribal water systems in particular.

<https://www.epa.gov/water-infrastructure/real-water-technical-assistance-realwaterta>

### **Annual Clean Water Act 303(d) Workshop**

EPA is hoping to host its annual Clean Water Act 303(d) Workshop in early June this year. These annual workshops are attended by EPA staff, states, territories, and Tribes and focus on various CWA 303(d) topics including water quality data and assessment and cross program collaboration. Last year's agenda is attached to give you a sense of what a typical workshop entails. We plan each year's workshop in coordination with a workgroup of around 6-10 interested attendees and we are looking for a Tribal representative to join the workgroup. The workgroup's primary role is to select topics for the upcoming workshop. The workgroup meets monthly and requires a time commitment of 1-2 hours each month between March and May.

If you are interested in joining the workgroup to help plan this meeting, please reach out to Rosaura Conde at [conde.rosaura@epa.gov](mailto:conde.rosaura@epa.gov).