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Spring: Planting New Seeds & New Possibilities

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A few days ago, feeling overwhelmed by all the uncertainty and difficulties in the world, as well as the many things our team has going on, I gratefully closed my laptop and went out into my garden. Spring here in this beautiful mountain town is really unpredictable. But, the sun was shining, Spotted Towhees were singing, pea seeds were sprouting, a Two-tailed Swallowtail butterfly was drifting over some of my early flowers, and the soil was still scented from the wonderful overnight rain we'd had. It felt good to just pause for a moment.

There haven't been a lot of pauses for our team lately, and I wanted to give you all some updates on what we're doing. A couple of months ago we opened our newest [self-paced, online, course](#) (Introduction to AI Tools for Tribal Environmental Professionals), and well over 100 of you are already enrolled! If you would like to sign up, simply [complete the enrollment request form](#). Now, we are in the process of creating a couple of new courses which we'll be announcing in the next few months.

The first, "Above Ground Storage Tanks: From Unknown Risk to Managed Asset", will take place June 16 and 17, from 10 AM to 2 PM Pacific. Our excellent presenters, Mark Howard, retired US EPA, and Jeremy Noah, Environmental Specialist with the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma, will provide an overview of ASTs, credentialing pathways, starting and growing your AST program, reporting requirements, and Tribal inspections. Keep an eye out, applications are coming soon to your inbox!

A second course we're working on is a new cohort-model series of trainings we'll be offering toward the end of the year that will be focused on Integrated Solid Waste

Management Plans. Many of you have worked with Julie and Amanda on a similar series of trainings focused on creating solid waste codes for your Nations, Tribes, and Villages, and we're excited to provide you with some assistance on ISWMP development.

We recently started a new [Legacy Hardrock Mine listserv](#) for anyone dealing with the effects of abandoned and legacy hardrock mines. There is a new [Abandoned and Legacy Hardrock Mines](#) page on our [Tribal Lands Assistance Center](#) (TLAC) site, and we're working on a virtual gathering for this new network in the summer, which will feature presentations by Tribal staff and plenty of time for open discussion. We're also expanding our emergency response and brownfields resources on TLAC, so if you have any sites, documents, or guidance you think others should know about, let us know!

We've also been busy working with our colleagues on the Tribal TAB project. Next month we're traveling to Tulsa and working with our friends at Cherokee Nation on a joint training and site visit. This will be our first of such an event, and we're really looking forward to it. If you haven't already, be sure to visit the new [Tribal TAB website](#), which has a ton of resources, calendar of events, a new online forum where you can chat with colleagues on different subjects, and information on how you can get involved with the [Tribal Brownfields Knowledge Circle](#).

And of course, we're busy as bees with [Tribal Lands & Environment Forum](#) (TLEF) work! Some of you have already been submitting session proposals, and we're looking forward to seeing a lot more! We have a lot of great events in the works, so be sure to check back often for updates on the website. And in the meantime, you can register, make a hotel reservation, learn more about the area, sign up for a free Multi Media Meetup table, and more on the website now.

One more thing I want to pass along. I'm taking two weeks of leave, and so I won't be back to work until the end of April. Those of you who know me well also know that is exceptionally rare as I'm not exactly a paragon of work-life balance! So for the next couple of weeks, don't hesitate to reach out to Julie (Julie.Meikowski@nau.edu), Amanda (Amanda.Kapp@nau.edu), or Sarah (Sarah.White@nau.edu).

We're all grateful we have the chance to work alongside all of you, and we honor the amazing work you do. We wish you peace and courage, and look forward to seeing you down the road.

Your ITEP Waste & Response Team

Todd, Julie, Amanda, Sarah, and Mikah