



Tribal Pesticide Program Council

Spring 2026

TPPC 2026 Annual Priorities Issue

Greetings!

As we move into the next five-year cycle of the Tribal Pesticide Program Council's cooperative agreement with the EPA, the TPPC would like to present its 2026 priorities. The TPPC membership were polled about the issues that are most important to them, and chose to highlight the seven priorities below as the primary concerns the group would like to work on in collaboration with EPA and other federal agencies (as appropriate) this year.

Children's Health

Studies have consistently shown that children exposed to pesticides (even at very low levels) may experience increased rates of multiple health and developmental problems including ADHD, autism, low IQ, childhood cancers, asthma, diabetes, and obesity.* Of particular importance are the numerous widely used pesticides with endocrine disrupting properties, since impacts to hormonal systems in developing children can have widespread, lifelong impacts on the affected individuals. And while these effects tend to be most pronounced in children of farmworkers or others who live or attend school in close proximity to agricultural operations, a variety of factors including the persistence and spread of pesticides in the environment as well as the prevalence of pesticide use in and around schools mean that children across the country are exposed to and being affected by these chemicals.

The TPPC would like to see more emphasis placed on children's health and reducing pesticide exposure routes to minimize impacts, so that every American child can have access to clean air, land, and water. This could include revitalizing and fully supporting the US Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Endocrine Disruptor Screening Program, and encouraging the use of integrated pest management (IPM) to reduce or even completely eliminate the amount of pesticides used in and around schools.



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TPPC 2026 Priorities *(continued)*

Increase Funding for EPA's Pesticide Programs

A lack of sufficient funding has long held Tribes back from being able to manage pesticide use on their lands to protect their people and environment from harm due to misuse or overuse of pesticides. While states and Tribes are both eligible to receive funding from the EPA to regulate pesticides, states have several other revenue streams at their disposal to fund their pesticide programs that are generally not available to Tribes. Thus EPA funding is critical to assist Tribes in fulfilling their pesticide regulatory responsibilities, and that funding has been more or less flat for many years despite rising costs of hiring staff and running a pesticide program.

The TPPC would like to see more funds allocated to support cooperative agreements with Tribes so that more Tribes can be empowered to regulate pesticide use on their own lands as co-regulators under the cooperative federalism model. Additionally, there is a need to better understand the extent of pesticide contamination in Tribes' water resources – including drinking water, groundwater, and surface water. Laboratory costs for the analysis of water samples are prohibitively expensive for many Tribes, resulting in a data gap that impedes tribal governments' ability to understand and address what their communities are being exposed to. The TPPC requests additional funding from EPA and/or other federal agencies to support their ability to test the water resources on their lands.

Enforcement & Compliance Assistance

Under the requirements of FIFRA, enforcement of pesticide use violations in Indian Country is primarily the responsibility of the EPA. Tribes may enter into enforcement cooperative agreements with the agency that empower them as co-regulators to take the initial enforcement and compliance steps of conducting inspections and collecting samples if a violation is suspected, then submitting reports to EPA for further enforcement action. Unfortunately, after doing their part in the process TPPC member Tribes often find that the agency doesn't pursue every case, instead focusing primarily on high-level cases and/or those that attract media attention.



The TPPC would like to see the agency find the resources to pursue all valid enforcement cases, since even smaller incidents are still violations of federal pesticide law, and appropriate enforcement can help deter future violations. Additionally, each Tribe with an enforcement cooperative agreement is required to produce a Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP) for Enforceable Case Evidence Gathering that details the protocols & procedures for their enforcement and compliance activities. Unfortunately there are not a lot of resources available to assist tribal staff in understanding what to expect in enforcement situations so that they can

prepare their QAPPs to the satisfaction of agency reviewers. The TPPC requests that a presentation and/or template be provided to explain the process, which would enable Tribes to produce better QAPPs and eliminate the inefficiency of repeated back-and-forth reviews and revisions by EPA and tribal staff.

Education & Training

The EPA and other federal agencies, along with a series of organizations funded by EPA cooperative agreements, produce numerous educational, outreach, and training materials on pesticide use and safety. In most cases these materials do not adequately address Tribes or tribal populations, despite the fact that the

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regulatory, legal, and cultural environment on tribal lands can differ in many important ways from that of non-tribal lands. In response to suggestions from the TPPC and others, EPA recently began revising its training materials for the certification of private applicators of restricted use pesticides within Indian Country to incorporate more tribal-specific examples and situations, and better inform applicators of the different rules and requirements they face when operating on tribal land. The TPPC would like to see other education and outreach materials revised in a similar fashion, including enforcement and worker protection safety (WPS) documents, the National Pesticide Applicator Certification Core Manual, and materials produced by the Pesticide Safety Education Programs.

Incorporate Tribal Exposure Data into EPA Risk Assessments



California Native basket weavers collect sedge at Grayson Riverbend Preserve.
Photo: Austin Stévenot

When making decisions on whether to register a new pesticide for use in agricultural or non-agricultural situations in the United States, or renewing the registration of existing pesticides, EPA produces a Risk Assessment for the product to evaluate its potential impact on human and environmental health. These Risk Assessments model possible exposure pathways based on a series of assumptions about the average American's diet and lifestyle. Since tribal lifeways often differ significantly from those of non-tribal citizens, EPA Risk Assessments created under these assumptions may not adequately represent the potential exposure of tribal members, and registration decisions based on these Risk Assessments may subject

tribal members to unforeseen risks from the pesticide product.

EPA has worked with the TPPC on past efforts to incorporate tribal consumption and exposure data into pesticide risk assessments, but to date these collaborations have not resulted in changes to the methodology or guidelines for conducting such assessments. Risk Assessments are also conducted for toxic chemicals under the Toxic Substances Control Act, and in response to similar concerns about tribal exposure pathways not being taken into account, EPA's Office of Pollution Prevention and Toxics (OPPT) recently released a document titled "Draft Considerations and Resources for Assessing Tribal Exposures in TSCA Risk Evaluations" to provide their risk assessors with guidance and published resources for existing consumption and exposure data to address the issue. The TPPC would like to see EPA continue its efforts to incorporate tribal exposure pathways into pesticide risk assessments, through continued efforts to collect and incorporate tribal consumption and exposure data and/or the production of a guidance document similar to that written by OPPT utilizing existing data.

Endangered Species Act Compliance

EPA is required to comply with the Endangered Species Act's (ESA) protections for federally listed threatened or endangered species, but has struggled to do so in the context of pesticide registrations and re-registrations. In recent years the agency has begun releasing strategies for the major classes of pesticides (rodenticides, insecticides, and herbicides so far) to update product labels and guidance to applicators in an attempt to bring its pesticide regulatory activities into compliance with the ESA. The TPPC applauds



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these efforts, as the protection of endangered species is vitally important to many of our member Tribes. However TPPC members are concerned that, by the agency's own admission, even with these efforts EPA still will not be in full compliance with the ESA. The TPPC strongly urges the agency to continue to improve its strategies and achieve full compliance with the ESA sooner than later. The TPPC also would like to see Tribes, as co-regulators along with states under the cooperative federalism model, have a seat at the table as the strategies are being developed or revised to ensure tribal concerns about endangered species are considered in the agency's approach to ESA compliance.

Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS)

In recent years there has been increasing concern about the human health and environmental risks associated with PFAS - a broad class of compounds found in many household and industrial products which have been dubbed "forever chemicals" due to their extreme resistance to degradation and longevity in the environment. As awareness grows of the risks posed by these compounds and the challenges around cleaning them up, attempts have begun to phase them out of products and replace them with less problematic ingredients.



The TPPC is particularly concerned with the introduction of PFAS into the environment through the application of pesticides. Although there is significant uncertainty currently around the risks of different types of PFAS due to the huge number of compounds that have been synthesized and used in a wide variety of products, of which a relatively small portion have been studied in detail, there are several ways in which PFAS may be included in pesticides or tank mixes and introduced to the environment. PFAS may be present in the active ingredient itself, "inert" ingredients added by the manufacturer (and often not disclosed as confidential business information), or adjuvants added at the time of application to

enhance the pesticide's efficacy; or PFAS may be unintentionally introduced by leaching from fluorinated polyethylene storage containers. The TPPC would like to see EPA take a stronger stand on eliminating PFAS from pesticide applications regardless of how they wound up in the mix, to ensure clean air, land, and water for every American.

* Pesticide Action Network North America, 2012. *A Generation in Jeopardy: How pesticides are undermining our children's health & intelligence*. (<https://www.panna.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/KidsHealthReportOct2012.pdf>)

TPPC Executive Committee Vacant Positions

The Executive Committee consists of TPPC Members elected by their peers to represent their regions on the Council. When fully staffed the Executive Committee includes the Chair and Vice-Chair, representatives from each of the ten EPA regions as well as one from Alaska, and four At-Large positions. Executive

Committee members are responsible for ensuring that their region's tribes are represented at TPPC meetings in order to determine and raise issues of importance to these tribes, and relay information back to them. Executive Committee members are encouraged to communicate with their Regional Tribal Operations Committee (RTOCs) and EPA Regional Offices prior to TPPC meetings in order to identify pesticide program needs and issues.

The TPPC is currently seeking regional representatives to fill several vacancies on the Executive Committee and represent their Tribes' and/or Tribal Organizations interests' related to pesticides and environmental concerns. Representatives must be nominated by a TPPC member from their region or may nominate themselves, and the representative must have an authorization letter on file. Current vacancies include Regions 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, and Alaska. If you are interested in representing your region or have questions about participating in the Executive Committee, please contact TPPC Coordinator Mark Daniels at mark.daniels@nau.edu or (928) 523-8897.

Updates and Announcements

Conferences and Meetings:

ASPCRO Annual Conference

The Association of Structural Pest Control Regulatory Officials (ASPCRO) will hold their Annual Conference **August 10-14** in Colorado Springs, CO. For more information click [here](#).

Trainings and Courses:

Endangered Species Act Compliance Workshop

The National Association of State Departments of Agriculture (NASDA) will provide a workshop on ESA compliance in Washington, DC on **May 19-21**. For more information click [here](#).

New and Emerging Technology PREP

The Pesticide Regulatory Education Program (PREP) will provide a training session on new and emerging technology **June 22-25** in Fort Collins, CO. For more information click [here](#).

Agricultural Use Concerns PIRT

NASDA will provide a training with a focus on agricultural use concerns in the Willamette Valley of Oregon on **July 14-17**. For more information click [here](#).

Non-Agricultural Pest Control Issues PREP

PREP will provide a training course on non-agricultural pest control in Fort Collins, CO **August 3-6**. For more information click [here](#).

Endangered Species Combo PREP

PREP will provide an endangered species combo training **September 21-24** in Fort Collins, CO. For more information click [here](#).

Inspector Basics PIRT

NASDA will provide a training on inspector basics and investigation training **October 6-9** in the Twin Cities, MN. For more information click [here](#).

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The TPPC is a member-based organization with more than 106 members from 67 Tribes and tribal organizations as of April 2026, whose activities are funded by a cooperative agreement with the EPA. The Council serves as a tribal technical resource, and provides a forum for dialogue between Tribes and the EPA on program and policy development relating to pesticides issues and concerns. Assistance provided to Tribes includes support in building tribal pesticide programs and conducting pesticide education and training, and the preparation of resources for Tribes interested in specialized issues such as Integrated Pest Management and pollinators. Through its interaction with the EPA, the TPPC keeps Tribes informed of developments in the regulation of pesticides and pesticide use, and provides feedback to the EPA on such matters from a tribal perspective (though it is important to note that communication between the EPA and the TPPC does not substitute for direct government-to-government consultation).

For information about how to join the TPPC, contact Mark Daniels at mark.daniels@nau.edu or (928) 523-8897.

