

National Tribal Water Council and EPA Monthly Conference Call
Wednesday, January 14, 2026
2:00 – 3:30 P.M. (ET)

CALL SUMMARY

I. Introductions

NTWC: Ken Norton (R9, Chair); Chauncey Means (R8, Vice Chair); Dan Kusneirz (R1); Brian Patterson (R2); Rainee Tetreault (R4); Shaun Livermore (R4), At-Large; Debbie Dotson (R6); Kayla Vondracek (R7); Yolanda Barney (R9), Navajo Nation; Scott Hauser (R10, At-Large)

EPA: Holly Galavotti; Karen Gude; Rory Hytrek; Lauren Kasparek; Christine Maietta; James Ray; Teagan Rostock; Amy Weber; Danielle Anderson; Erica Fleisig; Kendra Forde; Susan Holdsworth; Arianna Northbird Himango; Edward Dunne

ITEP: Elaina Doral

II. NTWC Updates (Ken Norton, NTWC)

• **NTWC Webinar Panelists**

Chair Ken Norton and Brian Patterson participated as panelists for two separate webinars. Chairman Norton presented at the Native American Rights Fund sponsored webinar on “Waters of the United States” on December 9, 2025. Brian Patterson presented at the joint National Tribal Air Association and National Tribal Water Council webinar on Tribal Reserved Rights on December 9, 2025.

• **New NTWC Member: Joshua Jojola, Pueblo of Santa Ana**

NTWC welcomed Joshua Jojola, Pueblo of Santa Ana, as the new At-Large Representative.

• **CWA Section 401**

NTWC plans to collaborate with the National Tribal Caucus to develop a comment letter on the proposed rule on the Clean Water Act Section 401.

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

• **EPA Introductions** for new NTWC At-Large Representative, Joshua Jojola, Water Quality Program Manager, Pueblo of Santa Ana, Region 6

• **EPA’s Proposed Rule to Revise the existing CWA Section 401 Water Quality Certification regulations** (Lauren Kasparek, Office of Wetlands, Oceans, and Watersheds)

On January 13, 2026, EPA announced the proposed revision to the CWA Section 401 Water Quality Certification. The proposed rule will be published in the Federal Register on January 15, 2026.

Laura Kasparek provided a [presentation](#) on the proposed revisions to the current rule. The major revisions are found in the: (1) scope of certification; (2) request for certification; (3) extending the reasonable period of time; (4); contents of certification decisions; (5) modifications; (6) Section 401(a)(2) process; and (7) Treatment as a State (TAS) provisions.

For more information, please visit <https://www.epa.gov/cwa-401>. EPA is hosting a tribal meeting on January 27, 2026, and a public meeting on January 28, 2026.

To access the fact sheet for Tribes: <https://www.epa.gov/system/files/documents/2026-01/tribal-fact-sheet-on-cwa-401-proposed-rule-january-2026.pdf>

To access the proposed rule fact sheet: <https://www.epa.gov/system/files/documents/2026-01/fact-sheet-on-cwa-401-proposed-rule-january-2026.pdf>

Questions/Comments

Chair Ken Norton discussed the significant impacts in the language in the proposed revisions. He noted the proposed changes display an erosion of the regulations and reverse progressions that tribal programs have made. Chairman Norton commented on the lack of engagement with tribal partners and that the federal government and its agencies have a trust responsibility to Tribes.

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

V. Consultation Opportunities/Announcements

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

VII. The NTWC's next monthly call, February 11, 2026

- Brief overview of the recent Supreme Court case, [City and County of San Francisco v. EPA](#) (2025), regarding CWA NPDES permits and "end-result" requirements (Nizanna Bathersfield, Office of Wastewater Management)
- NTWC Spring meeting (May 6-7) – agenda planning

Announcements/Upcoming Meetings:

EPA Proposes CWA Section 401 Rule to Streamline Permitting, Unleash Economic Growth, and Protect America's Waterways

On January 13, 2026, the EPA announced a proposed rule to revise the existing Section 401 water quality certification regulations. Once the proposed rule is posted in the Federal Register, EPA will open a **30-day public comment period**. Comments on the notice should be identified by Docket ID No. EPA-HQ-OW-2025-2929 and may be submitted online. Go to <https://www.regulations.gov> and follow online instructions for submitting comments to the docket. The agency will quickly review comments received as it works to develop a final rule in the spring of 2026.

The Agency will host a virtual public meeting on the proposed rule on January 28, 2026. Please see EPA's [section 401 website](#) for more information about outreach efforts.

[Link to the proposed rule](#); Link to [Press Release](#)