

National Tribal Water Council and EPA Monthly Conference Call
Wednesday, July 8, 2026
2:00 – 3:30 PM ET

CALL SUMMARY

I. Introductions (Elaine Wilson, ITEP)

NTWC: Ken Norton, Chair, R9; Chauncey Means, Vice Chair, R8; Dan Kusneirz, R1; Raine Tetreault, R4; Shaun Livermore, At-large; Debbie Dotson, R6; Joshua Jojola, At-large; Kayla Vondracek, R7; Ann Wyatt, Alaska; Scott Hauser, At-large; Mary Verner, R10; Yolanda Barney, Navajo Nation

EPA: Holly Galavotti; Jacob Alder; Danielle Anderson, Nizanna Bathersfield; Brenda Bowden; Andrew Byrne; Daniel Consigli; Matthew Floyd; Rory Hytrek; Rachel Kaiser; Gabriella Neusner; James Ray; Teagan Rostock; Conner Viox; Rose Kwok

ITEP: Nikki Cooley; Elaine Wilson; Elaina Doral

II. NTWC Updates (Ken Norton, NTWC)

- **Coordination with the Native American Rights Fund**

Daniel Cordalis, Native American Rights Fund (NARF), joined the NTWC's monthly call to discuss coordinating on tribal CWA and SDWA issues. A follow-up call will be scheduled to discuss how the NTWC and NARF can collaborate on the core priorities of the NTWC.

- **NTWC Project: Direct Implementation Tribal Cooperative Agreement**

NTWC continues to reach out to get tribal programs to apply for the Direct Implementation Tribal Cooperative Agreement (DITCAs). Chairman Norton would like to set up a coordination call with the EPA.

- **National Tribal Operations Committee Annual Meeting**

Chairman Norton shared an outline with Tabitha Langston, National Tribal Caucus Chair, that includes talking points for drinking water and CWA regulatory discussion. Chairman Norton plans to discuss the DITCAs and administrator's determination and how it's beneficial for Tribes to utilize.

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

- **Upcoming Meetings/Announcements**

- OITA's Tribal Partnership Group Review webinar on July 29
- [National Tribal Operations Committee \(NTOC\)](#) Annual meeting
 - NTC/TPG chairs only meeting: July 14
 - NTC/TPG chairs – OW meeting: July 16, 10:00 am (ET)
 - NTC/Regional RA's (TPG chairs invited to listen): July 16, 1:00 pm (ET)
 - NTC meeting with the Administrator's Office – July 17
- FY26 \$227 Million in Funding for Tribes and Alaska Native Villages to Improve Water Infrastructure
- \$25.5 million to Address Wastewater Challenges in Rural, Small, and Tribal Communities
- PFAS Proposed Rules – Comments due July 20, 2026
- Draft Guidance for Reducing Risk from PFOA and PFOS in Biosolids – Comments due September 4, 2026

- **Presentation/Discussion**

- **“Waters of the U.S.” (WOTUS) Update** (Rose Kwok)

The proposed rule was released in November 2025 and the comment period closed in January 2026. EPA and the Army received approximately 220,000 comments. Currently, EPA and the Army plan to release a supplemental notice of proposed rulemaking. The supplemental proposal is under interagency review at the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) under Executive Order 12866. Tribes may request a meeting through E.O. 12866 while the proposed rulemaking is under OMB review. Once released, the supplemental proposed rule will provide an additional opportunity for engagement and comments.

Questions/Comments

Chair Ken Norton commented that the NTWC is cautious about other options described in the proposal and noted the restrictive options.

- **Sixth Unregulated Contaminant Monitoring Rule (UCMR 6) Proposed Rule** (Rachel Kaiser, Office of Groundwater Drinking Water)

EPA is proposing the sixth [Unregulated Contaminant Monitoring Rule](#) (UCMR 6). Under the Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA), the UCMR program collects unregulated contaminant occurrence data in drinking water. The proposed UCMR 6 would require all large public water systems (PWSs) serving more than 10,000 people, all PWSs serving 3,300 to 10,000 people, and a representative sample of 800 PWSs serving fewer than 3,300 people, subject to the availability of annual appropriations and sufficient laboratory capacity to collect national occurrence data for seven ultrashort organofluorine compounds (including certain PFAS), three pesticide metabolites, 13 semi-volatile organic compounds, and seven purgeable organic compounds. EPA anticipates publishing the final rule in late 2026.

EPA is hosting two identical public webinars on August 11, 2026, and August 12, 2026. The deadline to submit comments is September 1, 2026.

Questions/Comments

Rainee Tetreault asked if the list of contaminants for this proposal is different than previous rounds. Rachel Kaiser replied that it is different than previous rounds. EPA selects 30 contaminants that have not been regulated or monitored, unless new information supports monitoring again, every five years based on public interest, available data, and the agency's priorities.

- **NTWC Fall Meeting** (Holly Galavotti, OW)

Holly Galavotti asked for feedback on the upcoming meeting's agenda and structure. The meeting topics will include drinking water and wastewater funding and technical assistance; CWA grant programs; and CWA regulatory updates and solicited other ideas and suggestions.

Questions/Comments

Scott Hauser commented that the presentations at the last meeting were lengthy and there was not much time for questions afterward. Holly Galavotti replied that we could explore more ways to discuss the meeting topics to make it more interactive. Holly suggested co-

presenters for each topic to have various perspectives. Scott added that the meeting provides an opportunity for EPA to learn about Tribes.

Rainee Tetreault would like to include a field trip to visit drinking water and wastewater sites.

Chairman Norton would like to invite David Harvey and Sam Russell, Indian Health Service, for a presentation.

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 – Rainee Tetreault agreed to be a representative for the association but will start in the fall.
- 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, August 12, 2026

Announcements/Upcoming Meetings:

Draft Guidance for Reducing Risk from PFOA and PFOS in Biosolids

Comments are due September 4, 2026

On July 1, 2026, the U.S. EPA released the memorandum Draft Guidance for Reducing Risk from PFOA and PFOS in Biosolids. This memorandum includes draft guidance that, if finalized, would provide recommendations that may be helpful to operators of wastewater treatment plants (WWTPs) and related facilities, landowners and farmers, state and Tribal water agencies, and the public. It provides voluntary recommendations for potential ways to mitigate risks from PFOA and PFOS when managing sewage sludge and biosolids.

The draft guidance is being released for a 60-day public comment period. Comments are due September 4, 2026. The EPA also may use public comments filed to help inform any future agency actions.

- Document: [Draft Guidance for Reducing Risk from PFOA and PFOS in Biosolids \(pdf\)](#)
- Federal Register Notice: [Draft Guidance for Reducing Risk From Perfluorooctanoic Acid \(PFOA\) and Perfluorooctane Sulfonic Acid \(PFOS\) in Biosolids; Establishment of a Public Docket; Request for Feedback](#)
- [Press Release](#)
- [Biosolids website](#)

Sixth Unregulated Contaminant Monitoring Rule (UCMR 6) Proposed Rule

60-day public comment period (July 1, 2026 – September 1, 2026)
Two identical public webinars on August 11, 2026, and August 12, 2026.
[Register for the webinars.](#)

EPA is taking a key step to advance Safe Drinking Water Act implementation by proposing to monitor contaminants that are not currently regulated but may be present in drinking water. Specifically, the agency is proposing monitoring requirements for 30 unregulated contaminants in the Sixth Unregulated Contaminant Monitoring Rule (UCMR 6).

“Across the country, Americans have concerns about exposure to unregulated chemicals in their drinking water, and the Trump EPA is ensuring these concerns are addressed with gold standard science,” said EPA Assistant Administrator for the Office of Water Jessica Kramer. “The information we collect through this important monitoring effort will inform the agency’s future decisions to protect drinking water for Americans nationwide.”

The Safe Drinking Water Act requires that once every five years, EPA issue a list of unregulated contaminants to be monitored by public water systems called the Unregulated Contaminant Monitoring Rule (UCMR). By gathering nationwide data on these contaminants, EPA and the public learn more about their occurrence, concentrations, and potential risk to public health. The proposed list of unregulated contaminants is being announced for public comment. It contains 30 chemicals, including certain PFAS. Once the rule is finalized, EPA will collect and release data on these chemicals from sampled public water systems.

EPA’s data collection effort under this new UCMR will continue to inform the agency’s PFAS OUT initiative to help drinking water systems address PFAS. PFAS OUT is a proactive outreach initiative to provide information on resources, including funding and technical assistance, to drinking water systems with PFAS challenges. This outreach will provide practical, interactive, and location-specific resources, including webinars and information on how to access funding and technical assistance to address PFAS. All water systems will be able to access [PFAS OUT](#) resources and can secure technical assistance through EPA’s [RealWaterTA](#). Comments may be submitted online: <https://www.regulations.gov>, Docket ID: **EPA-HQ-OW-2023-0469**. For more information about the current and previous UCMR cycles, please visit EPA’s [UCMR website](#).

EPA Announces \$227 Million in Funding for Tribes and Alaska Native Villages to Improve Water Infrastructure

EPA is announcing more than \$227 million in funding for American Indian Tribes and Alaska Native Villages to improve drinking water and wastewater services. These resources will provide Tribal communities with assistance they need to better protect the health of both their citizens and environment. This funding will help Tribal communities access safe and reliable drinking water and will help them protect their environment from wastewater discharges. Federally recognized Tribes can use these funds to advance public health protections by making necessary investments in water infrastructure, which can help support compliance with Clean Water Act and Safe Drinking Water Act requirements and address important public health challenges such as removing lead pipes or addressing per- and polyfluorinated substances (PFAS) in drinking water.

The FY 2026 funding will be administered through the following programs:

- **\$71 million:** Clean Water Indian Set-Aside (CWISA), including **\$4.5 million** for CWISA Emerging Contaminants (CWISA-EC)

- **\$134 million:** Drinking Water Infrastructure Grants
- **\$19 million:** Emerging Contaminants in Small or Disadvantaged Communities (EC-SDC) Tribal Grant Program
- **\$3 million:** Small, Rural, and Tribal (SmaRT) Drinking Water Assistance Grant Program (formerly known as the Small, Underserved, and Disadvantaged Communities (SUDC) Tribal Grant Program)

[Learn more about EPA's Tribal Water program.](#)

[Learn more about EPA's Tribal Drinking Water Funding Programs.](#)

[Learn more about EPA's Clean Water Indian Set-Aside Program.](#)

EPA Announces \$25.5 million to Address Wastewater Challenges in Rural, Small, and Tribal Communities

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) announced the availability of \$25.5 million in grant funding for technical assistance providers to help small, rural, and Tribal communities address wastewater infrastructure challenges to protect human health and comply with the Clean Water Act. The work performed under this grant program will advance the Trump EPA's Real Water Technical Assistance (RealWaterTA) initiative launched earlier this year to align all technical assistance for wastewater systems with tried-and-true services, such as engineering and design expertise, operational support, workforce development, and financial management. EPA is accepting applications from water technical assistance providers until August 14.

"The Trump Administration sees rural America as the backbone of this great nation and is committed to supporting these communities by strengthening vital water infrastructure," said EPA Assistant Administrator for Water Jess Kramer. "That's why we are using our RealWaterTA initiative to support water systems using proven, best-practice approaches that will most effectively address local needs. This \$25.5 million in new funding will accelerate progress and deliver real results."

The goals of [RealWaterTA](#) focus on human health and compliance with the Safe Drinking Water Act and Clean Water Act. It also prioritizes accountability for technical assistance providers and real-world results. This initiative is benefiting Americans nationwide, especially in Tribal communities and rural areas where small systems face unique financial and operational challenges, including aging infrastructure, workforce shortages, increasing costs, and declining rate bases. EPA's grant funding will be used to assess communities' most pressing challenges, including supporting water quality compliance issues; providing training on water infrastructure and management best practices; helping communities navigate the federal funding application process, and investing in reliable infrastructure solutions. The Rural, Small, and Tribal Technical Assistance providers help these communities access resources to support infrastructure improvements. These providers also support rural, small, and Tribal wastewater treatment systems – centralized and decentralized – to build technical, managerial, and financial capacity to operate their systems and maintain compliance.

EPA is accepting applications until August 14, 2026. [Learn more about the Rural, Small, and Tribal Wastewater Technical Assistance Grant Program and how to apply.](#)

Background

The Rural, Small and Tribal Clean Water Technical Assistance Grant Program was established by the America's Water Infrastructure Act of 2018. One of EPA's Real Water Technical Assistance initiatives, the program aims to provide technical assistance to improve small wastewater system operations and

management practices, making them more sustainable and resilient, and supporting EPA's mission to protect public health and the environment. To date, the program has awarded over \$102 million.

[Learn more about EPA's Real Water Technical Assistance efforts.](#)

[Learn more about the tools, training, and resources for small, rural, Tribal wastewater systems.](#)

Communities can request assistance by visiting the agency's [Real Water Technical Assistance webpage](#).

PFAS Proposed Rules

Comments due July 20, 2026 (60 days)

On May 18, 2026, the EPA announced two proposed PFAS rules.

- The proposed PFOA and PFOS Compliance Extension Rule upholds the federal drinking water Maximum Contaminant Levels (MCLs) for perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA) and perfluorooctane sulfonic acid (PFOS) while strengthening practical implementation by providing an option for drinking water systems to request two additional years - to 2031 - to comply with the enforceable limits. Following the proposed rule publishing in the Federal Register, the EPA will accept written comments on the proposed rule in the public docket for 60 days at www.regulations.gov under Docket ID: EPA-HQ-OW-2025-1742.
<https://www.epa.gov/sdwa/proposed-pfoa-and-pfos-compliance-extension-rule>
- The proposed rule to Rescind Regulatory Determinations and Regulations for PFHxS, PFNA, HFPO-DA, and Hazard Index Mixtures corrects the Biden Administration's failure to follow the clear requirements of the Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA) in promulgating regulations for perfluorohexane sulfonic acid (PFHxS), perfluorononanoic acid (PFNA), hexafluoropropylene oxide dimer acid and its ammonium salt (HFPO-DA) (commonly known as GenX chemicals), and Hazard Index mixtures of these three PFAS plus perfluorobutane sulfonic acid (PFBS). Following the proposed rule publishing in the Federal Register, the EPA will accept written comments on the proposed rule in the public docket for 60 days at www.regulations.gov under Docket ID: EPA-HQ-OW-2025-0654.
<https://www.epa.gov/sdwa/proposed-pfas-rescission-rule>

The EPA will hold a virtual **public hearing on July 7, 2026**, where the public is invited to provide the EPA with verbal comments on the proposed rules. During the hearing, the agency will present information on the proposed rule and exemption schedule and then receive comments from the public. Registration to attend and/or provide verbal comment during the hearing is required and the last day to pre-register to provide public comment is July 1, 2026.

Information and registration for the public hearing is available [here](#).

The EPA will post an agenda and list of pre-registered public commenters to this [website](#) no later than July 6, 2026. For questions related to the public hearing, please contact PFASNPDWR@epa.gov.

Please note that each separate rule proposal has an individual rulemaking docket for written comments. Please ensure any written comments are submitted to the specific docket associated with your comments.

Press Release: <https://www.epa.gov/newsreleases/epa-advances-comprehensive-pfas-strategy-legally-defensible-practical-scientificallly>

Notification of Consultation opportunity: CWA 312(n) Uniform National Discharge Standards Phase II Batch 3 Rulemaking

Consultation period: May 15 to July 14, 2026 (60 days)

The EPA, in coordination with the Department of War, is initiating consultation with federally recognized Indian Tribes on a proposed rulemaking to establish national standards for discharges incidental to the normal operation of vessels of the Armed Forces (e.g., U.S. Navy, Coast Guard, Marine Corps, Air Force) that operate nationwide in coastal and inland waters. The standards to be developed in this proposed rulemaking would be the third and final batch of Phase II performance standards for marine pollution control devices under the Uniform National Discharge Standards (UNDS) program. The EPA and DoW are developing performance standards for three discharges: clean ballast, compensated ballast, and dirty ballast. These performance standards are intended to reduce environmental impacts associated with vessel discharges, stimulate the development of improved pollution control devices and environmentally sound military practices, and establish nationwide standards. This proposed rulemaking will not affect vessels operated by Tribes because the rule only regulates discharges from vessels of the Armed Forces of the United States. However, Tribes may be interested in this action because vessels of the Armed Forces of the United States, including Coast Guard vessels, may operate in or near Tribal waters. For more information about these discharges, please visit:

<https://www.epa.gov/vessels-marinas-and-ports/uniform-national-discharge-standards-unds-rulemaking-process>.