

## **Tribal Superfund Working Group (TSFWG) Conference Call**

Wednesday, February 18, 2015

10:00 am Alaska; 11:00 am Pacific; 12:00 pm Mountain; 1:00 pm Central; 2:00 pm Eastern

### Attendance

- Todd Barnell, ITEP
- Michael Chacon, Pueblo de San Ildefonso
- Randy Connolly, Spokane Tribe of Indians
- Anne Dailey, USEPA OSRTI
- Richard DuBey, Short Cressman & Burgess PLLC
- Amy Garcia, Pueblo of Laguna
- Greg Jojola, Pueblo of Laguna
- Julie Jurkowski, ITEP
- Cindy Marchand, Colville Confederated Tribes
- Joanne Moore, USEPA Region 10
- Bob Myers, USEPA OSRTI
- Rochelle Rollenhagen, Little River Band of Ottawa
- Janice Sims, USEPA OSWER
- Larry Tippit, Peoria Tribe of Indians
- LaDonna Turner, USEPA Region 6
- Jason White, Cherokee Nation

### Introductions and Welcome

- Everyone on the call briefly introduced themselves.

### Presentation by Staff from the Pueblo of Laguna

- Greg Jojola and Amy Garcia, from the Pueblo of Laguna, shared information on the work they are doing in regard to the Jack Pile Mine. This former uranium mine, which closed in the early 1980s, covers nearly 3,000 acres. It was put on the NPL in 2013. Greg Jojola gave a history of the site, including changing ownership of the old mine, previous reclamation efforts, and current concerns with the effects of contaminants on local populations, as well as wildlife and water resources. Amy Garcia spoke about a recent trip Pueblo of Laguna staff to the Quapaw Tribe of Oklahoma's Tar Creek site. They learned a great deal about potential funding opportunities, document management, and community outreach and education activities. They both stressed the importance of tribes having a seat at the table as these types of projects proceed. While visiting Tar Creek, they found stories of the challenges faced by the Quapaw Tribe in communication and consultation extremely helpful as they look to develop a solid foundation for their work on the Jack Pile mine site. Working with USEPA, Greg, Amy, and other staff at the Pueblo of Laguna, were also able to take training on proper records management, which they found extremely helpful.
- During discussion with others on the call, LaDonna Turner from USEPA Region 6 mentioned they have personnel specializing in community outreach and education, and encouraged people to contact her office if they need help in this area. Anne Dailey, with USEPA OSRTI, also offered their services, as they have numerous resources that might be useful.

### Superfund Site Assessment Workload Coordination Guide Workgroup's Survey

- Jason White, from the Cherokee Nation, encouraged the members of the TSFWG to take a few moments to complete a survey (which was sent out via email to the TSFWG prior to the call). The results of this survey will be used to help develop a guide that will promote cost-effective, efficient ways of coordinating and communicating Superfund site assessment work among the USEPA and its state and tribal partners at non-Federal sites that require evaluation under the

federal Superfund Site Assessment process. You can access the survey (which closes on March 12) at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/SAWLC>.

#### Updates on the Tribal Lands and Environment Forum

- Todd Barnell, with ITEP, gave an update on the Tribal Lands and Environment Forum (TLEF), which will take place in Minneapolis, August 17-20, 2015. Once again there will be a special track focused on Superfund and other sites of concerns, as well as time set aside for the TSFWG to meet and network with one another. ITEP staff is also looking into setting up a special field trip during the TLEF to a local Superfund site. Registration is now open for the TLEF, and ITEP is accepting session proposals and applications for exhibitor spaces. Online registration, session proposal, and exhibitor documents are available on the ITEP website at: [http://www4.nau.edu/itep/conferences/confr\\_tlf.asp](http://www4.nau.edu/itep/conferences/confr_tlf.asp)
- During discussion, several suggestions were made on potential topics/activities to be included at the TLEF. These included:
  - Grants management training and strategies for finding various types of funding to create a stable financial foundation for Superfund related activities;
  - A session focused on the changes regarding the grants.gov website – now that tribes need to submit their information electronically, training on how to do this, as well as cost tracking, would be very helpful;
  - Techniques to efficiently document and track progress on projects;
  - The development and maintenance of databases, to help organize all the data being collected by tribes, as well as strategies for using this data most effectively in outreach and education activities;
  - Education and outreach strategies that enhance inter-generational activities and empower all members of the community;
  - An afterhours dinner (in addition to the regular meeting of the TSFWG) so that members of the working group can socialize and network in a more informal setting;
  - Strategies for enhancing USEPA and tribal communication and cooperation, and how to utilize these relationships over the long term;
  - Updates of projects focused on cleanup activities involving lands contaminated with uranium;
  - Sessions that link work on contaminated sites with the issues of water quality and the effects of climate change;
  - Information on the consultation process with USEPA.

#### Information Exchange

- Randy Connelly, with the Spokane Tribe of Indians, discussed an issue he is facing regarding wetlands. As part of a cleanup process, being conducted by a mining company, existing wetlands will be disturbed. To compensate, new wetlands will need to be developed. Larry Tippit, with the Peoria Tribe of Indians, has faced similar challenges and was able to suggest a wetlands expert who may be of assistance.