

**National Tribal Water Council and EPA Monthly Conference Call**  
**Wednesday, June 12, 2024**  
**2:00 – 3:30 P.M. ET**

**SUMMARY NOTES**

**I. Introductions** (Elaine Wilson, ITEP)

**NTWC:** Chair Ken Norton (R9); Vice Chair Chauncey Means (R8); Brian Patterson (R2); Shaun Livermore (R4), Nancy Schuldt (R5); Yolanda Barney (Navajo Nation, R9); Eric Morrison (Alaska, R10); Ann Wyatt (Alaska, R10); Mary Verner (R10)

**EPA:** Holly Galavotti (OW); Jacob Adler (OWWM); Danielle Anderson (OST); Susan Holdsworth (OW); Larry Maurin (EPA R9); Gabriella Neusner (OGWDW); Julian Oliver (OGWDW); James Ray (OST); Amy Weber (AIEO); Jonathan Binder; Aleah Holt; Kyle Carey

**ITEP:** Elaine Wilson, Elaina Doral

**II. NTWC Updates** (Ken Norton, NTWC)

Chair Ken Norton provided a highlight of the topics discussed during the previous NTWC-only call.

- **Letter of Support for Wetland Protection Development Grants**

At the request of the National Association of Wetland Managers, NTWC drafted a letter of support for wetland protection development grant funding. The letter was submitted on May 30, 2024.

- **NTWC's Comment Letter on the Restructuring of the National Tribal Caucus**

NTWC discussed three main areas of comments, including NTC as an advisory committee, increasing the number of tribal elected officials on the NTC, and the interaction between the NTC and tribal partnership groups. There was good feedback, which will be used to develop a comment letter. NTWC plans to submit the comment letter by the deadline of August 9, 2024.

- **FY 2025-2026 National Program Guidance**

NTWC members were encouraged to provide comments on the program guidance by the deadline of June 18, 2024.

- **Tribal PFAS Working Group**

The Tribal PFAS Working Group developed a brochure about the working group, which is available on the NTWC website.

**III. EPA Office of Water Updates: Tribal Conservation Guide** (Larry Maurin, EPA Region 9)

Larry Maurin provided an update on the Tribal Water and Natural Resources Conservation Resource Guide. The resource guide is being developed based on recommendations from a 2022 Tribal 319 Equity Workgroup.

The goals of the guide include developing a resource guide for tribal environmental program managers and staff and developing a list of recommendations for improving delivery of federal conservation assistance programs to tribes. The development of the guide included feedback from two teams: federal project team and tribal representative group.

The overall structure of the guide will provide information on navigating federal assistance, federal program inventory, conservation topic sections, and non-federal sources of tribal assistance. Each conservation topic will include examples, resource spotlights, federal program spotlights, and a tribal case study. One of the conservation topics is *Protecting and Restoring Waters*.

The next steps include the federal and tribal representative teams reviewing the draft guide and continuing team calls. In July and August, federal agencies will review the guide and provide comments to the EPA. EPA plans to publish the final guide in September 2024.

Larry Maurin asked if the NTWC would be interested in providing a foreword to the guide.

**Questions/Comments:**

Chair Ken Norton commented that the NTWC is supportive of the document and agrees to develop a foreword. The NTWC has provided a foreword statement to EPA to be included in the guide in August 2024. EPA thanks the NTWC for their support.

Vice Chair Chauncey Means asked if the guide would include information on match requirements for each of the funding programs. Larry Maurin replied that the guide will try to cover that information for each of the programs being spotlighted. It may be included in the excel spreadsheet, which may be a percentage.

**IV. Announcements/Upcoming Meetings**

- Next monthly meeting – July 10<sup>th</sup> - EPA Region 10 Alaska office (Mat Martinson, Erin Seyfried) will join the call to provide information on 301(h) waivers that could be helpful to NTWC's white paper.
- [EPA Determines that Alaska's Water Quality Standards Need to be Updated Based on More Accurate Fish Consumption Rates to Protect Communities from Toxic Pollution \(June 6\)](#)
  - Email from Adam Baron (R10) - Tribal consultation notification sent to Tribal leaders and Tribal Environmental Directors in AK (227 Alaska Native Villages) as well as Alaska Native Corporation leaders.
    - Information webinars on **June 13, 2024, from 12:00-1:30pm Alaska Time** and **June 20, 2024, from 12:00-1:30pm Alaska Time**.
    - The EPA must conclude consultation meetings by **Friday, August 9, 2024**, so that input from Tribal governments can be reviewed and considered in advance of publication of a potential proposed rule in the Federal Register.
    - Following an EPA proposal of new and revised human health criteria for Alaska or a final water quality standards submittal from the state, there will be opportunity for further Tribal consultation and coordination.
  - 2019 AK fish consumption report (EPA funded).
  - [Alaska Statewide and Regional Estimates of Consumption Rates in Rural Communities for Salmon, Halibut, Herring, Non-marine Fish, and Marine Invertebrates \(EPA-contracted report\) \(2019\) \(PDF\)](#)  
<https://www.epa.gov/ak/alaska-human-health-water-quality-criteria>

**Comment**

Eric Morrison commented on the State of Alaska regulations for subsistence fishing rights. Individuals are restricted to 16 fish per permit for subsistence rights as compared to sport and commercial fishing, which is 25 fish per day.

- [EPA Releases Information that States and Tribes Can Use to Protect Local Fish from Toxic Tire Chemicals](#)
  - Published water quality screening values under the CWA related to short-term concentrations of 6PPD and 6PPD-quinone (6PPD-q). The EPA's non-regulatory and non-binding screening values provide information that Tribes, states, and local governments can use to monitor their waterways and help protect aquatic life from these harmful pollutants.
  
- [Biden-Harris Administration Announces \\$225 million to Improve Drinking Water and Wastewater Infrastructure for Tribes and Alaska Native Villages \(May 22\)](#)
  
- [Biden-Harris Administration Announces \\$30.7 Million to Support Water Systems in Small and Rural Communities \(May 21\)](#)  
**Comment:**  
Chair Ken Norton requested for information on the budget information for the July monthly call.
  
- [Clean and Safe Water in Indian Country](#) – EPA website
  - FY22 NPG Tribal Measures Fact Sheet
  - OW Tribal Newsletter – June edition
  
- June 10 – 14 - Tribal and Indigenous Climate Intensive
  - Thursday, June 13, 12-1:30 pm ET, [OW and the National Tribal Water Council, Climate Priorities in the Water Program](#)
    - EPA provides presentation on the Office of Water Climate Adaptation Implementation Plan (Mindy Eisenberg, 10 min)
    - NTWC (Chairman Norton) - water-related climate priorities (5 min)
    - NTWC (Daniel Stone - Upper Snake River Tribe Foundation) presents water-related climate case study (25 – 30 min)
    - Discussion/question time
  - Thursday, June 13, 1:30-2:50 pm ET, [OAR and National Tribal Air Association, Climate Impacts on Air Quality and Health](#)
  - Thursday, June 13, 3-4:20 ET, [OCSP and the National Tribal Toxics Council: Toxics and Climate Change](#)

## V. Consultation Opportunities

- **Indian Reservation Drinking Water Program**
  - The consultation period extends from May 21 to July 22, 2024.
  
- **National Tribal Caucus reorganization as a Federal Advisory Committee (FAC) under the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA)**
  - Tribal Consultation period extended to August 9, 2024.
  
- [FY 2025-2026 National Program Guidance](#) comment period extended to **June 18**

- EPA will post final FY 25-26 National Program Guidance online.
- Visit EPA's National Program Guidances webpage for comment template:  
<https://www.epa.gov/planandbudget/national-program-guidances-npgs>.
- **Consultation Opportunity: Development of the Sixth Proposed Unregulated Contaminant Monitoring Rule (UCMR 6) for Public Water Systems**
  - Consultation period – March 10 – June 20, 2024
- **Proposed research permit application** pursuant to the *Marine Protection, Research and Sanctuaries Act* to conduct a scientific research study of a marine carbon dioxide removal technique in ocean waters offshore of Massachusetts and New Hampshire.
  - Notice of a complete permit application
  - Consultation and coordination end July 1

**VI. Closing** (Ken Norton, NTWC)

Chair Ken Norton greatly appreciated the participation at the 2024 CWA Tribal Water Forum held in May 2024. There were great presenters from both tribes and EPA, and a great experience.

Chair Norton will be participating in a call with the Native American Rights Fund regarding litigation of the tribal reserved rights rule. Nancy Schuldt noted how the tribal reserved rights rule is making inroads and protecting wild rice. NTWC will be looking forward to the discussion on updating the State of Alaska water quality standards.

**VII. Upcoming**

- Next NTWC and NTWC/EPA monthly calls: July 10, 2024