



National Tribal Water Council & EPA Office of Water 2023 Spring In-Person Meeting



The National Tribal Water Council (NTWC) and EPA Office of Water conducted its 2023 spring in-person meeting on May 16-17, 2023. The two-day meeting was hosted by the EPA Office of Water at the EPA headquarters in Washington, D.C. The NTWC meets in person biannually, with one of the meetings held with EPA officials in Washington, DC, to discuss water issues important to tribes.

The first day of the meeting started with opening remarks from Ken Norton, NTWC Chair; Kenneth Martin, Director of the American Indian Environmental Office; and Radhika Fox, Assistant Administrator for EPA's Office of Water. The first day of the meeting included presentations and discussions on tribal water infrastructure and the Clean Water Act 106 tribal grant program and updates and discussion on *Waters of the United States*, the tribal federal baseline water quality standards rulemaking, and revisions to federal water quality standards regulations to protect tribal reserved rights.

The second day of the meeting included a roundtable discussion where members provide updates from their regions and tribal program. The meeting welcomed new NTWC members - Chauncey Means, Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes (Region 8), who attended virtually, and Scott Hauser, Upper Snake River Tribes Foundation (Region 10 At-Large), who attended in person. The day included presentations on EPA climate adaptation efforts, an update on EPA's PFAS Strategic Roadmap, a presentation on DOI's Interagency Working Group on Mining Reform, and research updates from the Office of Research and Development's Safe and Sustainable Water Resources Research Program.



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NEWSLETTER

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<https://nau.edu/ntwc>

Protecting Our Sacred Waters: An Introduction to the National Tribal Water Council



The National Tribal Water Council created a video that highlights the work and mission of the Council. The video features interviews with NTWC Members: Chairman Ken Norton, Shaun Livermore, Nancy Schuldt, and Eric Morrison. The video may be accessed at the NTWC's MediaSpace page at [Protecting Our Sacred Waters: An Introduction to the National Tribal Water Council](#).

NTWC 2023-2024 Priorities

The National Tribal Water Council recently completed its [2023-2024 Priorities](#) document. The ten (10) priorities focus on advocating for protection of tribal waters and water-related resources, plus developing comment letters in response to proposed federal initiatives and rulemaking actions.

The Council continues to focus on collaborating with appropriate federal agencies and strengthening federal programs, such as Clean Water Act Section 401 certification, to protect tribal waters and tribal water-related resources.

The complete document is available on the NTWC's website at www7.nau.edu/itep/main/ntwc.



UPDATES & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Drinking Water System Infrastructure Resilience and Sustainability Grant Program Webinar – June 20, 2023 (3:30 PM ET)

This webinar will serve as the preannouncement of the [Drinking Water System Infrastructure Resilience and Sustainability Program](#), which aims to provide funding to assist public water systems in underserved communities that are disadvantaged communities or communities with a population of less than 10,000 individuals for the purpose of increasing drinking water resilience to natural hazards. Join us as we discuss this grant competition, sharing information on eligibility, funding and how to apply.

To register, please visit: https://usepa.zoomgov.com/webinar/register/WN_ERTkIlwHTP6YqT8QB5Tofg

2023 Tribal Lands and Environmental Forum – August 14-17, 2023

Registration is open for the 2023 Tribal Lands and Environment Forum, which will be held August 14-17, 2023, in Syracuse, New York. This event will be both in-person and hybrid. This is the 13th annual forum for environmental professionals from tribes, US EPA, state/local/federal agencies, and other interested parties to meet, share knowledge, and learn from one another how to improve management, protection, and restoration of tribal lands. The deadline to register is July 31, 2023. The registration fee is \$175 (in-person) or \$25 (virtual). For more information, please visit: <https://sites.google.com/view/tlef2023/home?authuser=0>

GRANT OPPORTUNITIES

EPA's Request for Applications to Support the National Tribal Water Council

Deadline: July 31, 2023

EPA's Office of Water is now accepting applications for a multi-year cooperative agreement to support the efforts of the [National Tribal Water Council \(NTWC\)](#), composed of tribal governmental representatives. The NTWC works to provide a unique platform to facilitate and enhance tribal participation, input, training, and information exchange among tribes; promote sharing of technical information and best management practices to improve and preserve water quality and provide adequate sanitation and safe drinking water in tribal communities; identify and analyze high-priority, water-related issues and actions from tribal perspectives; encourage the development and enhancement of tribal water resource protection programs; and raise tribal water program issues to EPA and offer input on national water policy initiatives affecting tribes.

Eligible applicants include states, local governments, federally recognized Indian tribes, intertribal consortia, territories, possessions of the United States (including the District of Columbia), public and private universities and colleges, hospitals, laboratories, and public or private nonprofit institutions. The total amount of expected funding available under this announcement is approximately \$1,610,500. EPA anticipates that one award will be made under this announcement, with an anticipated project period of five years.

Please submit written questions on or before 11:59 P.M. (ET) on July 17, 2023, via email with EPA-OW-IO-23-01 in the subject line to tribalwater@epa.gov. Additional information is available on www.grants.gov under Funding Opportunity Announcement EPA-OW-IO-23-01. Applications must be submitted electronically to EPA via www.grants.gov on or before 11:59 P.M. (ET) on July 31, 2023 to be considered for funding. For more information, please visit: <https://www.epa.gov/tribalwater/request-applications-support-national-tribal-water-council>.

FY23-24 Tribal Regional Ocean Partnership BIL Funding

Deadline: August 30, 2023

On May 31, 2023, NOAA announced the availability of approximately \$1.8 million for federally recognized tribes. This funding is provided under the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law. The focus is on encouraging increased tribal participation with regional ocean partnerships. Funding will support tribal actions related to regional ocean and coastal priorities and will further the coordinated management of ocean resources and data. [Funding applications](#) are due at 8:59 P.M. (PT), 11:59 P.M. (ET) on August 30, 2023. You can find more information on these funds at coast.noaa.gov/funding/infrastructure.html. If you have questions, please contact rop.iija@noaa.gov.

Also, NOAA will be holding a live question and answer session for interested applicants on June 21, 2023, 1:00-2:00 P.M. (ET). Pre-registration is required. To register, please visit: <https://register.gotowebinar.com/register/9195790119332754268>. There will be no formal presentation at this live session. Participants are welcome to join, ask their questions, and drop off at any time during the hour.

TRIBAL CONSULTATION OPPORTUNITIES

Proposed Revisions to EPA's Consultation Policy and Treaty Rights Guidance

Deadline: July 21, 2023

EPA's Office of International and Tribal Affairs has initiated tribal consultation and coordination with tribes on proposed revisions to EPA's tribal consultation policy and guidance for discussing tribal treaty rights when consulting with tribes. The consultation and coordination period is scheduled from March 1, 2023 – May 19, 2023. Additional information is available in the consultation notice and plan, and via TCOTS here: <https://tcots.epa.gov/ords/tcotspub/f?p=106:5::1644:::>

Tribal Consultation & Public Comment Opportunities *(continued)*

EPA's Proposed Rule to Establish Federal Baseline Water Quality Standards for Indian Reservation Waters

Deadline: August 1, 2023

EPA is continuing consultation and coordination with federally recognized Indian tribes on a proposed rulemaking that would establish federal baseline water quality standards (WQS) under the Clean Water Act (CWA) for waters on Indian reservations that currently do not have CWA WQS in place.

EPA conducted tribal engagement and consultation on the concepts reflected in this proposed rule on two separate occasions – the first in 2016 to inform the Agency's 2016 Advance Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (ANPRM) for Federal Baseline Water Quality Standards for Indian Reservations and the second between June and September 2021, prior to drafting the proposed rule. EPA has resumed consultation and coordination after signing the proposed rule and initiated a 90-day public comment.

The consultation provides an opportunity for tribes whose waters may be covered by the baseline WQS to engage in dialogue with EPA in circumstances where the tribe seeks to be excluded from coverage by the baseline WQS rule. The timeframe for a tribe seeking to be excluded from the rule to communicate to EPA began on May 5, 2023 (the date of publication of this proposed rule in the *Federal Register*) and ends 90 days after the final rule is published in the *Federal Register*.

EPA will hold identical listening sessions via webinar for tribal leaders and staff:

- June 21, from 1:00 – 3:00 pm (ET)
- July 6, from 2:00 – 4:00 pm (ET).

To register, please visit EPA's website at <https://www.epa.gov/wqs-tech/tribal-consultation-and-coordination-epas-proposed-federal-baseline-water-quality>

Additionally, EPA is holding two public hearings on June 27 from 2:00 – 4:00 PM (ET) and July 12 from 2:00 – 4:00 PM (ET) so that interested parties may provide oral comments on EPA's proposed rule. To register for the public hearings, please visit EPA's website at <https://www.epa.gov/wqs-tech/promulgation-tribal-baseline-water-quality-standards-under-clean-water-act>.

The deadline to submit comments is August 1, 2023. Consultation materials are available on EPA's Tribal Consultation Opportunities Tracking System (TCOTS) website located at: <https://tcots.epa.gov>.

EVENTS & WEBINARS

Native American Water Association

The Native American Water Association is a national non-profit, 501(c)6 organization founded to provide tribal water and wastewater operators, managers, utility commissions and tribal leadership with continued training and technical assistance in their goals to strengthen tribal sovereignty and self-determination, and protect health and environment in Indian Country.

Upcoming events include:

- Wastewater Certification Review: June 27, 2023 (10:00 AM MST)

For more information and to register, please visit: <https://www.nawainc.org/wordpress/>

Events & Webinars *(continued)*

Inter Tribal Council of Arizona, Inc. – National Tribal Water & Wastewater Operator Training & Certification Program Certification Program

The Inter Tribal Council of Arizona, Inc. National Tribal Water and Wastewater Operator Training and Certification Program is providing live online training. Each course consists of sequential lessons that are provided in a series of live online classes that are 3-hours in length.

Upcoming courses include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Wastewater Lagoons Operations & Maintenance: July 24-31, 2023 (Online)
- Water Distribution Level 1: August 2-16, 2023 (Online)
- SDWA Federal Regulations: August 15-24, 2023 (Online)

To register or to view the 2023 training schedule, please visit: <https://itcaonline.com/programs/environmental-quality-programs/tws-tmap/tws-training-events/>

Tribal Climate Health Project's Tribal Health and Adaptation Peer-Learning Roundtable Webinars

The Tribal Climate Health Project has developed training to assist Tribes to begin to prepare, cope, build resilience to, and recover from the health and other impacts of climate change. This advanced training from the Tribal Climate Health Project is for Tribal-serving practitioners, including environmental and health professionals, who have gained some level of transferable, real-world climate and health knowledge and experience through their work with Tribes. This training is open to Tribes and Tribal-serving professionals throughout the United States who work within the intersections of climate change, health, and community well-being.

Below is the upcoming schedule:

- July 20, 2023: Infrastructure Improvements & Information Technology
- August 17, 2023: Operations and Maintenance & Intertribal/Interagency Collaborations

For the complete schedule and more information about the webinars, please visit: <http://ped.palatribes.com/tcha-webinar-vi/>

EPA Watershed Academy's Hazard Mitigation Planning and Water Resource Management Module

This module is intended for water quality and hazard mitigation professionals that are interested in integrating water quality issues and/or nature-based solutions into state or local Hazard Mitigation Plans (HMPs), and highlights the benefits of working across water quality and hazard mitigation programs. Modules in this series can be used as training tools to help planners from both worlds explore activities of mutual interest and benefit. Case studies and examples are provided to assist hazard mitigation planners with integrating water resource programs into HMPs and help watershed planners understand the synergies between water resource plans and HMPs. To begin the course, please visit: <https://www.epa.gov/watershedacademy/hazard-mitigation-module>

National Association of Wetland Managers Tribal Wetland Programs Webinars

To register, please visit: <https://www.nawm.org/nawm/nawm-webinarscalls/4840-epa-region-10-tribal-wetland-training-webinars>

- September 21, 2023: Education and Outreach Efforts to Support Tribal Wetland Programs
- November 2, 2023: Approaches to Sustainable Funding for Tribal Wetland Programs

EPA Small Drinking Water Systems Webinar Series

To register, please visit: <https://www.epa.gov/water-research/small-drinking-water-systems-webinar-series>

- June 27, 2023: Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL)
- July 25, 2023: Fifth Unregulated Contaminant Monitoring Rule (UCMR 5)
- August 29, 2023: Cybersecurity

Events & Webinars *(continued)*

EPA Tools and Resources Webinar Series

To register, please visit: <https://www.epa.gov/research-states/epa-tools-and-resources-webinar-series>

- June 21, 2023: Chemical Risk Assessment for PFAS in Biosolids
- July 19, 2023: Forecasting HABs

EPA Air, Climate, & Energy Research Webinar Series

To register, please visit: <https://www.epa.gov/air-research/air-climate-energy-research-webinar-series>

- July 18, 2023: Wildfire Impacts on Water and Ecosystems

EPA Water Research Webinar Series

To register, please visit: <https://www.epa.gov/water-research/water-research-webinar-series>

- June 28, 2023: Reducing Nitrogen in Groundwater through Enhanced Onsite Wastewater Treatment and Wetland Restoration
- August 30, 2023: Methods and Information to Support to Development of Aquatic Life Criteria to PFAS

NTWC MEMBERS

For more information on our members, visit [Meet the Council](#).

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