




## National Tribal Water Council and U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Office of Water 2024 Fall In-Person Meeting

The National Tribal Water Council and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Office of Water held its 2024 Fall In-Person Meeting on September 25-26, 2024, in Cloquet, Minnesota. The meeting was hosted by Nancy Schuldt (NTWC Region 5 representative), water projects coordinator for the Fond du Lac Band of Lake Superior Chippewa. The meeting was attended by twelve National Tribal Water Council (NTWC) members (10 in-person and 2 via Zoom), four EPA staff, and two ITEP staff.



The first day started with opening remarks from Felicia Wright, EPA Office of International and Tribal Affairs, American Indian Environmental Office (OITA, AIEO), and from Ken Norton, NTWC Chair (Region 9). Ms. Wright highlighted current activities within the AIEO, such as the General Assistance Grant (GAP) new performance management system, the proposed National Tribal Caucus reorganization, funding opportunities from the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) and Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) funds, and climate protection. Chairman Norton focused his remarks on the operations and maintenance (O&M) of tribal water and wastewater infrastructures, and adequate O&M funding for those infrastructures; and the importance of tribal participation in the multi-federal agency Infrastructure Task Force. Other topics NTWC members discussed included membership recruitment and reviewing its current priorities. The day continued with presentations on the Tribal Reserved Rights Rule and how to effectively work with the National Tribal Caucus. Nancy Schuldt provided an overview and accomplishments of the Fond du Lac Band of Lake Superior Chippewa water projects.

The second day started with a tour of Perch Lake and the Spirit Lake Native Farms. A tribal elder welcomed the group to Perch Lake where manoomin (wild rice) grows and is harvested. Nancy Schuldt introduced her water team as they prepared to conduct water monitoring activities at the lake. The next tour was at Spirit Lake Native Farms where maple syrup is harvested and manoomin is parched and finished. Bruce Savage, FDL Tribal Chairman and owner of the farms, and his daughter Kaylah, guided the tour and described



 **CONTACT INFO:**  
Elaine H. Wilson  
NTWC Manager  
[Elaine.Wilson@nau.edu](mailto:Elaine.Wilson@nau.edu)  
Elaina Doral  
NTWC Program Coordinator  
[Elaina.Doral@nau.edu](mailto:Elaina.Doral@nau.edu)

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## NTWC/EPA Fall In-Person Meeting *(continued)*



**NTWC and EPA at Perch Lake (L to R):**  
*Erica Fleisig; Holly Galavotti; Elaina Doral; Brian Patterson; Rainee Tetreault; Ann Wyatt; Chauncey Means; Elaine Wilson; Vern Northrup; Shaun Livermore; Ken Norton; Nancy Schuldt; Eric Morrison; Amy Weber; Scott Hauser; Felicia Wright; and Mary Verner*

the processing of both the maple syrup and the manoomin.

The afternoon meeting was held at the tribe's Natural Resources Management Building with presentations on the Revisions to the State of Alaska's Water Quality Standards (WQS), new EPA Guidance for Fish Advisories, and updates on the Baseline Water Quality Standards and WQS Approaches. The meeting concluded with a local drum group who sang both an honor song and a traveling song for the meeting participants.

Nancy Schuldt and the Fond du Lac Band of Lake Superior Chippewa were great hosts and the meeting was a success. The NTWC and EPA Office of Water will hold its next in-person meeting in spring 2025 in Washington, D.C.

For more information, please visit:

- Spirit Lake Native Farms: <https://spiritlakenativefarms.com/>
- Fond du Lac Band of Lake Superior Chippewa Water Protection: [https://www.fdlband.org/services/resource\\_management/environmental\\_programs/water/index.php](https://www.fdlband.org/services/resource_management/environmental_programs/water/index.php)

## FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

### EPA FY 2025 Tribal Nonpoint Source Management Grants

**Deadline for Applications: December 11, 2024**

On September 23, 2024, the EPA issued the [FY2025 Funding Opportunity for Indian Tribes and Intertribal Consortia for Nonpoint Source Management Grants Under Clean Water Act Section 319](#). Federally recognized Tribes with treatment-as-a-state approval under Clean Water Act Section 319 are eligible to apply; eligibility information and additional information on this competition is available on the [EPA Tribal NPS website](#). As in past years, the funding available through this funding opportunity is to support Tribal projects focused on implementing on-the-ground best management practices that will help protect or restore waters from nonpoint sources of pollution. Applicants may request up to \$125,000 in federal 319 funds through this solicitation. As part of the EPA's effort to increase equity within the NPS program, a portion of competitive grant funding will be reserved for Tribal competitive grant applicants that have not been awarded a competitive grant under this solicitation in the past five (5) years. Applications are due December 11, 2024.

Prospective tribal applications may submit questions to [tribal319grants@epa.gov](mailto:tribal319grants@epa.gov) by November 26, 2024. The deadline to submit an application is **December 11, 2024** through [Grants.gov](#) by 11:59pm EST in order to be considered for funding. Late applications will not be considered for funding. Answers to [frequency asked questions](#) for this grant are available on the [EPA's Tribal NPS website](#); additional questions may be submitted to [tribal319grants@epa.gov](mailto:tribal319grants@epa.gov).



## NTWC Accepting Applications to Fill Four Open Membership Positions: Region 3, Region 6, Region 7, and At-Large

The National Tribal Water Council is a technical and scientific body established to advocate for the best interests of federally-recognized Indian and Alaska Native Tribes in matters pertaining to water. The Council is currently accepting applications from tribal water professionals employed by a federally recognized Tribe or tribally authorized organization to fill four (4) open positions.

### Region 6

*Open until Filled*

The position is open to tribal water professionals from Region 6 (Arkansas, Louisiana, New Mexico, Oklahoma, and Texas).

### Region 7

*Open until Filled*

The position is open to tribal water professionals from Region 7 (Iowa, Kansas, Missouri, and Nebraska).

### **NEW!** At-Large

*Open until Filled; Review of Applications will begin December 1, 2024*

The position is open to tribal water professionals organization from throughout the United States (Regions 1 through 10).

### **NEW!** Region 3

*Open until Filled; Review of Applications will begin December 1, 2024*

The position is open to tribal water professionals from Region 3 (District of Columbia, Delaware, Maryland, Pennsylvania, Virginia, and West Virginia).

### Member duties include, but not limited, to:

- Participating in monthly virtual calls;
- Attending semi-annual in-person meetings; and
- Creating and participating in crafting response documents to policy and/or rulemaking actions.

We are seeking individuals that are passionate and vocal about tribal water issues. Interested applicants must submit the following: application form, letter of interest, and professional resumé. Please refer to the Council's [membership application information packet](#) for additional details.

To express your interest or obtain more information, please contact Elaine Wilson at [elaine.wilson@nau.edu](mailto:elaine.wilson@nau.edu).

# UPDATES & ANNOUNCEMENTS

## EPA Tools for Lagoon Wastewater Systems

On September 27, 2024, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency released two sets of resources to help improve public health and clean waterway protections for small, rural and/or Tribal communities that rely on lagoon wastewater treatment systems. EPA is hosting two webinars to provide an overview of the resources. To register: [https://www.zoomgov.com/webinar/register/WN\\_0ccf7NdVTUebbW75Hly4jg#/registration](https://www.zoomgov.com/webinar/register/WN_0ccf7NdVTUebbW75Hly4jg#/registration)

### First Stop Toolbox for Lagoons on October 22 (1:00 PM-2:30 PM ET):

This resource provides a user-friendly diagnostic tool that identifies technical, financial, and regulatory support resources. Small communities that are experiencing lagoon system compliance challenges or that are interested in improving facility operations can use this tool to identify solutions and best practices. This webinar will give an overview of how users can utilize the tool to address technical and/or compliance challenges facing a particular lagoon.

### Individual Lagoon Tool and the Small Lagoon Communities Economic Streamlining Tool on November 7 (1:00 PM-3:00 PM ET):

This webinar will give an overview of how the Individual Lagoon Tool and the Small Lagoon Communities Economic Streamlining Tool can be used to streamline the economic analysis needed to demonstrate the need for a WQS variance, where appropriate, consistent with the EPA's regulation and economic guidance. The webinar will also provide a demonstration of each tool and discuss the EPA's guidance on developing an ammonia WQS variance based on the outputs from the tools.

## EPA Releases Final PFAS Aquatic Life Criteria and Benchmarks

On October 1, 2024, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency finalized science-based water quality concentrations for 10 PFAS that will help states and tribes protect fish and other aquatic life as part of its PFAS Strategic Roadmap. The levels, referred to as water quality criteria and benchmarks, are not regulatory and are not required. States and Tribes can consider using them to develop water quality standards which inform the implementation of other Clean Water Act programs, like wastewater discharge permits. For more information, please visit: <https://www.epa.gov/wqc/pfas-and-aquatic-life>

## Tribal Climate and Health Adaptation Summit, November 6-7, 2024

The Pala Band of Mission Indians' Tribal Climate Health Project is hosting the Tribal Climate and Health Adaptation Summit on November 6-7, 2024, in Pala, California. The summit's theme is "Taking Action to Protect Health from Wildfire, Drought, and Heat Disasters." Throughout this two-day summit, Tribal-serving professionals working at the intersection of climate change, health, and community wellbeing will participate in interactive instruction and peer-to-peer learning activities that will build knowledge and about developing, implementing, and evaluating adaptation plan strategies that safeguard Tribal health and are rooted in traditional knowledge and values. For more information and to register, please visit: <https://tribalclimatehealth.org/save-the-date-for-the-2024-tribal-climate-amp-health-adaptation-summit/>

## EPA Virtual Water Quality Standards Academy, December 2-6 and 9, 2024

The EPA will be holding a six-day session of its virtual Water Quality Standards (WQS) Academy on December 2-6 and December 9 from 11:30 AM to 4:30 PM (EST). The WQS Academy provides WQS development and implementation information to WQS professionals associated with the federal, state, tribal, and local agencies. Registration is free and open to the public. Registration will close on November 22<sup>nd</sup>, or when capacity is reached. To register: [https://events.zoom.us/ev/AvvP2CnrKdmJwVtbp4Ov4xNPRn7GeckEnJR-1rFdNgREDW4HYeW9~Aj9XzvbeGmQTaq\\_hla7b2BN923RdMrEEz0SWIN4Bq9LNf3julpVARE8Ajg](https://events.zoom.us/ev/AvvP2CnrKdmJwVtbp4Ov4xNPRn7GeckEnJR-1rFdNgREDW4HYeW9~Aj9XzvbeGmQTaq_hla7b2BN923RdMrEEz0SWIN4Bq9LNf3julpVARE8Ajg)

# TRIBAL CONSULTATION OPPORTUNITIES

## EPA's Proposed Renewal of the Multi-Sector General Permit

**Deadline: October 25, 2024**

The U.S. EPA initiated consultation and coordination with federally recognized Indian Tribes on the renewal of the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Multi-Sector General Permit (MSGP) for stormwater discharges associated with industrial activities under the Clean Water Act. EPA renews this permit every five years, and the current MSGP is scheduled to expire on February 28, 2026.

Under the Clean Water Act, specific categories of industrial activities listed in 40 CFR 122.26(b)(14) must obtain coverage under an NPDES permit for stormwater discharges. EPA is typically the NPDES permitting authority in Indian country. As a result, facilities with stormwater discharges from industrial activities in Indian country need permit coverage under EPA's MSGP or under an individual NPDES permit issued by EPA. Industrial facilities intending to seek coverage under EPA's MSGP must submit a Notice of Intent (NOI) certifying that they have met the permit's eligibility conditions and that they will comply with the permit's requirements. More information about the MSGP can be found at <https://www.epa.gov/npdes/stormwater-discharges-industrial-activities>.

The deadline to submit comments is October 25, 2024. For additional information on this proposed MSGP permit renewal, please visit: <https://www.epa.gov/npdes/stormwater-discharges-industrial-activities>.

## EVENTS & WEBINARS

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

The Inter Tribal Council of Arizona, Inc. National Tribal Water and Wastewater Operator Training and Certification Program is providing online, in-person, and blended trainings.

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

- Wastewater Lagoons: October 28-November 8, 2024 (Blended)

To register or to view the 2024 training schedule, please visit: <https://itcaonline.com/programs/environmental-quality-programs/tws-tmap/tws-training-events/>

### EPA Computational Toxicology Communities of Practice Webinar

- October 24, 2024: Sequence Alignment to Predict Across Species Susceptibility (SeqAPASS)

To register: <https://www.epa.gov/chemical-research/computational-toxicology-communities-practice>

### EPA Small Drinking Water Systems Webinar Series

- October 29, 2024: Special Extended Webinar on PFAS – Rule Implementation and Treatment
- November 26, 2024: Emergency Response

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



Have a story, idea, or update to share?

Email us at [elaina.doral@nau.edu](mailto:elaina.doral@nau.edu).



## Events & Webinars *(continued)*

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### Contaminated Site Clean-Up Information Training & Events

- October 22, 2024: ITRC - Contaminants of Emerging Concern Identification Framework
- October 28, 2024: Virtual Technology Fair – Lead Detection and Treatment for Water
- October 28, 2024: FRTR Fall 2024 General Meeting – Source Differentiation and Risk Assessments for Sites Impacted by PFAS
- November 7, 2024: ITRC - Microplastics

To register: <https://clu-in.org/training/>

### EPA Drinking Water Training

- October 29, 2024: Revised Total Coliform Rule (RTCR) Training

To register: <https://www.epa.gov/dwreginfo/drinking-water-training>

### EPA Water Research Webinar Series

- October 30, 2024: UV Filters in Sunscreens and the Impacts on Aquatic Organisms

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

### EPA Environmental Justice Webinar Series for Tribes and Indigenous Peoples

- October 30, 2024: Cumulative Impacts
- November 20, 2024: Advancing EJ Through Storytelling

To register: <https://www.epa.gov/environmentaljustice/environmental-justice-tribes-and-indigenous-peoples#webinars>

### USGS Friday's Findings Webinar Series

- November 8, 2024: USGS Research to Support Pacific Lamprey, A Species of Special Tribal Interest in the West
- November 22, 2024: Developing Resources for Tribal Partnership Science

To register: <https://www.usgs.gov/news/webinar-series-fridays-findings>

### EPA Harmful Algal Blooms, Hypoxia, and Nutrients Research Webinar Series

- November 20, 2024: HABs Toxicity and Health Effects of Anatoxin-A

To register: <https://www.epa.gov/water-research/harmful-algal-blooms-hypoxia-and-nutrients-research-webinar-series>

# NTWC MEMBERS

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

**Ken Norton**

*Hoopa Valley Tribe  
Region 9 (NTWC Chair)*  
[kenpnorton@gmail.com](mailto:kenpnorton@gmail.com)

**Brian Patterson**

*Oneida Nation  
Region 2*  
[bpatterson@oneida-nation.org](mailto:bpatterson@oneida-nation.org)

**Nancy Schuldt**

*Fond du Lac Band of Lake Superior  
Chippewa, Region 5*  
[nancyschuldt@fdlband.org](mailto:nancyschuldt@fdlband.org)

**Eric Morrison**

*Salamatof Tribe  
Region 10 - Alaska*  
[emorrison@salamatoftribe.org](mailto:emorrison@salamatoftribe.org)

**Mary Verner**

*Snoqualmie Tribe  
Region 10*  
[mary.verner@snoqualmietribe.us](mailto:mary.verner@snoqualmietribe.us)

**Chauncey Means**

*Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes  
Region 8 (NTWC Vice Chair)*  
[chauncey.means@cskt.org](mailto:chauncey.means@cskt.org)

**Rainee Tetreault**

*Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians  
Region 4*  
[raintetr@ebci-nsn.gov](mailto:raintetr@ebci-nsn.gov)

**Celeste Hockings**

*Lac du Flambeau Band of Lake Superior  
Chippewa Indians, Region 5 - At-Large*  
[chockings@ldftribe.com](mailto:chockings@ldftribe.com)

**Ann Wyatt**

*Klawock Cooperative Association/Tribe  
Region 10 – Alaska*  
[annwyatt@klawocktribe.org](mailto:annwyatt@klawocktribe.org)

**Daniel Kusnierz**

*Penobscot Indian Nation  
Region 1*  
[dan.kusnierz@penobscotnation.org](mailto:dan.kusnierz@penobscotnation.org)

**Shaun Livermore**

*Poarch Band of Creek Indians  
Region 4 - At-Large*  
[slivermore@pci-nsn.gov](mailto:slivermore@pci-nsn.gov)

**Yolanda Barney**

*Navajo Nation  
Region 9*  
[ybarney@navajo-nsn.gov](mailto:ybarney@navajo-nsn.gov)

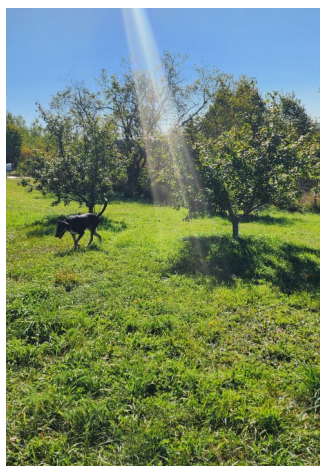
**Scott Hauser**

*Upper Snake River Tribes Foundation  
Region 10 - At-Large*  
[scott.hauser@usrtf.org](mailto:scott.hauser@usrtf.org)

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email: [itep@nau.edu](mailto:itep@nau.edu)



Photos from the NTWC/EPA Fall Meeting: Fond du Lac Band Resource Building (Top Left); Spirit Lake Native Farms (Bottom Left and Center); Ricing Sticks/Knocking Sticks (Right)