



Welcome to the Full Circle Newsletter

Lead Screening Levels Lowered for CERCLA sites and RCRA Corrective Action Sites

On January 17, the US EPA [announced](#) that it is significantly lowering recommended screening levels, as well as strengthening guidance, for investigating and cleaning up lead-contaminated soil in residential areas where children live and play. I know many of you in the front lines have been advocating for this type of action for a long time, and this kind of good news is really welcome. I especially want to thank members of the TWAR Steering Committee who have been working on this for a long time, and our EPA colleagues who met with the TWAR SC the day before this announcement was made to let them know the good news.

You'll find the full [Updated Soil Lead Guidance for CERCLA Sites and RCRA Corrective Action Facilities](#) as well as a helpful two-page [explainer](#) by clicking the hyperlinks. (And keep in mind screening levels are not cleanup standards. This will help our EPA colleagues make site-specific cleanup decisions to protect nearby communities, but cleanup decisions are specific to each site. Still, this is terrific news and a good step forward.)

While the guidance goes into effect immediately, EPA welcomes feedback from the public which may be considered in any future updates to the guidance. Please submit written feedback on the guidance in the public docket on www.regulations.gov (Docket ID: [EPA-HQ-OLEM-2023-0664](#)) for 60 days from January 17, 2024 – March 17, 2024.

Take Ten Minutes to be Inspired: Amazing Restoration by Tribes Along the Upper Columbia

Those of you who attended the 2018 TLEF will remember our wonderful partners at the Upper Columbia United Tribes. They have just published a really inspiring video about their work on reintroducing salmon and restoring habitats. This video shows how the five Tribes have taken the lead in both creating collaboration *and* in creating opportunities for new life. Give yourself ten minutes to be inspired and check out their video: [Reconnecting Fish, Water, and People](#). Much thanks and gratitude to all the people who have made this success possible in the Upper Columbia!

Meet Our Team



Todd Barnell
Program Manager
Todd.Barnell@nau.edu

Julie Jurkowski
Senior Program Coordinator
Julie.Jurkowski@nau.edu

Amanda Kapp
Senior Program Coordinator
Amanda.Kapp@nau.edu

Julaire Scott
Research Assistant
Julaire.R.Scott@nau.edu

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Curious About Renewable Energy Projects on Contaminated Lands?

Lately I've found myself going down rabbit holes on projects that are using contaminated lands for renewable energy development. The other day I came across some really interesting resources about potential renewable energy development at the Carson River Superfund site, which our colleagues at the Fallon Paiute Shoshone Tribe have been dealing with for a long time. A comprehensive Renewable Energy Reuse Assessment was done on this site, and it makes for some interesting reading. If you visit EPA's [Superfund Redevelopment Program's page for this site](#) you can read the assessment, check out a story map of the site, and delve into a lot more information.

If you are not familiar with EPA's Superfund Redevelopment Program, they have also been working with the Quapaw Nation on some potential initiatives as well. They provide reuse planning support and technical assistance for lots of projects, and this kind of work on restoring lands – as you all know – can be hugely beneficial in many ways. They have a page where [you can find your area's contact](#). If you have any interest in these kinds of projects go ahead and reach out.

Congrats to Tracy Horst and Rob Roy!

I'm sure many of you have heard about EPA's new Tribal Solid Waste Operations and Maintenance Workgroup. The workgroup is going to be tackling the vital issue of funding for Tribal solid waste operations and maintenance. EPA has appointed several knowledgeable and dedicated Tribal professionals with a lot of experience in this area to the new workgroup. And all of us here on the Waste & Response Team are tickled pink that two wonderful members of the TWAR SC have been nominated to serve! Congratulations to both Rob Roy (La Jolla Band of Luiseño Indians) and Tracy Horst (Choctaw Nation). We all are glad you'll be at the table.

Get To Know the TWAR Steering Committee

We recently sat down with two members of the TWAR SC and asked them to share their thoughts on the work they do for Tribes, Nations, and Native Villages across the country, as well as what the group means to them. We have a new video you can check out on [the new Join Us page](#) of the TWAR SC website. Be sure to check it out – and keep in mind we'll be accepting applications for the group in just a few months!

Save the Date for the 2024 Tribal Lands and Environment Forum!

Mark your calendars – the 2024 TLEF will be taking place **August 12 through 15 in Eugene, Oregon!** We are in the process of setting up registration and our session proposal form, both of which will be available soon. Once we have those set up, we'll be letting you know. But we wanted to make sure you got

the dates on your calendar, given there are so many other events going on next year. We look forward to seeing you then!

Events, Webinars and, Opportunities

A longtime colleague and friend of ours, Chelsea Jones at Cherokee Nation, is serving on a workgroup focused on the training needs of environmental staff from Tribes, states, and municipalities. Chelsea really wants to hear from her Tribal colleagues so she can make sure their needs are being met. If you want to share your thoughts with her and the rest of the workgroup, [follow this link!](#)

Learning directly from one of your colleagues at another Nation or Native community can often be the best way to find solutions to challenges you are facing. That is where [our mentor match program comes in!](#) We are always accepting applications for this opportunity. While we can't always find a good mentor for all situations, we will do our best! Over the years we've enabled Tribal staff to travel to a different Tribe and tour recycling facilities, compost operations, Superfund sites, and reuse centers. These visits have allowed them to see how things work on the ground and talk to all the staff involved, so they could design or improve similar operations relevant to their communities. We've hosted virtual meetings where Tribal professionals could work through UST, brownfield, and emergency response challenges with others who faced similar challenges and came up with creative solutions. If you'd like to be considered for this opportunity, just click the link above, fill out the application, and we'll let you know if we can help.

If you missed our virtual presentation and discussion on Climate Vulnerability Assessments at Sites on the National Priorities List, you can now view the recording on our [Tribal Lands Assistance Center website!](#) You can also watch recordings of past meetings that cover a variety of topics related to working with contaminated sites, as well as find lots of other information (including our new page dedicated to PFAS issues).

Our colleagues at OLEM launched a new web area on [Climate Change, Land and Emergency Management](#). And I want to say, I'm really impressed this one! This site helps organize a lot of useful information and makes it easier to find the resources you need – whether they are focused on renewable energy projects on contaminated lands, adaption strategies, case studies from groups that are being innovative, and more. It's definitely worth a look.

ITEP's Tribes and Climate Change Program (TCCP) is now working on Volume 2 of the Status of Tribes and Climate Change (STACC) report. The STACC report continues to seek and uplift the voices of Tribes/Indigenous Peoples on the impacts of, and solutions to, climate change in the context of the Indigenous peoples in the United States. The first volume was published in 2021: [Link to the first volume](#). This new volume is focused on Indigenous and Traditional Knowledges. The thing that makes this report really special is it includes firsthand narratives at the beginning of each chapter that share experiences of responding to climate change from an Indigenous lens, and will include written and video submissions. If your Nation or Village has stories to

share, I strongly encourage you to contact Kelsey at Kelsey.Morales@nau.edu.
The narratives are due on Monday, February 26, 2024.