

MONTHLY UPDATE for TRIBES AND THE EN

From the Tribal Exchange Network Group (TXG)



Tribal Programs Use EN Funding to Build Capacity through Technology

Staff from the Bishop Paiute Tribe provide an overview of how they have leveraged funding from the Exchange Network to build capacity in their water quality program, enabling them to have more robust and responsive monitoring and reporting for decision-makers and the community.

The Bishop Paiute Tribe's Water Quality Control Program (WQCP) has been responsible for receiving and examining drinking water samples across the Owens Valley since 2001.

The program has utilized paper forms for sample collection and analysis since its inception, which has led to challenges regarding storage space, issues when staff are absent or in the field, and susceptibility to loss, damage, or access, potentially compromising sensitive data.

They identified a need to transition to a streamlined system for receiving drinking water samples, as well as improve quality assurance and quality control processes, and overcome the logistical challenges of paper documents. Through the use of funds from EN grants, the Tribe was able to implement technology solutions that include the use of digital field forms, workflow diagrams, and reproducible scripts for assessing and summarizing data, in order to expand and enhance their Water Quality Control Program.

Read more about their efforts [HERE](#) and contact us if you have your own story to share!

EN Grant Resources and History:
<https://www.epa.gov/exchangeneetwork/previous-exchange-network-grant-projects>

TRIBAL EXCHANGE NETWORK GROUP (TXG) EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

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Sheryn Olson
Inter-Tribal Monitoring Data Project Manager, Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission

Lisa Gover
Director - Environmental Quality, Gila River Indian Community

Has your Tribe received an Exchange Network grant that benefitted your program?

Let us know so we can share your story!

bit.ly/3vLEurl

NEWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Revised EPA Consultation Policy and Guidance for Discussing Tribal Treaty or Similar Rights

EPA released the revised EPA Policy on Consultation with Indian Tribes and its companion Guidance for Discussing Tribal Treaty or Similar Rights on December 7. To learn more about the EPA Consultation Policy, please read the [Consultation with Tribes webpage](#) and the [press release](#).

Webinar for Tribes: EPA Policy on Consultation with Indian Tribes January 29 at 2pm ET

EPA will hold a webinar for Tribes regarding the [EPA Policy on Consultation with Indian Tribes](#) and the companion [Guidance for Discussing Tribal Treaty or Similar Rights](#). This webinar will provide an overview of the newly revised Policy and Guidance documents. It is EPA's policy to consult on a government-to-government basis with federally recognized Tribal governments when EPA actions or decisions may affect Tribes. The EPA Policy on Consultation with Indian Tribes establishes standards for the consultation process. The Guidance for Discussing Tribal Treaty or Similar Rights complements the policy by helping EPA staff navigate discussions with Tribes when an agency action or decision may affect such rights. [Register online](#).

Combined ETEP/GAP Work Plan Template

EPA's American Indian Environmental Office (AIEO) is excited to announce that the proposed Combined EPA-Tribal Environmental Plan (ETEP) and the Indian Environmental General Assistance Program (GAP) work plan template is now ready for review. This 60-day comment period ends on February 2, 2024. Please share this message with anyone that may want to comment, including current GAP grantees.

Resources:

- See the [Federal Register Notice \(FRN\)](#)
- View the [proposed combined template](#). Additional information can be found by clicking "View More Documents (6)".
- Comments regarding the template can be submitted referencing Docket ID No. EPA-HQ-OITA-2023-0383 [online](#) (preferred) or by [email](#).

Comment period ends 2/2/24

[GAO Looks at the Status of Artificial Intelligence in Modeling Natural Hazards](#)

GAO found that certain types of artificial intelligence (AI) are being applied to forecasting models for natural hazards such as severe storms, hurricanes, floods, and wildfires. Some uses of machine learning are considered close to operational, while others require years of development and testing. Read more about the potential benefits and challenges identified, as well as recommendations for the future at the link above.

**GET IT
ON YOUR
CALENDAR!**



2024 Webinar Series on EPA's GeoPlatform

The US EPA's Geospatial Training Staff will host bi-monthly webinars for those interested in the topics outlined below. These are a great opportunity to learn more about the EPA GeoPlatform!

- *January 22: EPA Applications (1 hr)*
- *February 5: GeoPlatform Dashboard & How to Make Content Public (2 hrs)*
- *February 26: Getting Started with ArcGIS Pro (1 hr)*
- *March 4: GeoPlatform Basics & Advanced Data Topics (2 hrs)*
- *March 18: StoryMaps (1 hr)*
- *April 8: GeoPlatform Dashboard & How to Make Content Public (2 hrs)*
- *April 22: EPA Applications (1 hr)*
- *May 6: GeoPlatform Basics & Advanced Data Topics (2 hrs)*
- *May 20: Getting Started with ArcGIS Pro (1 hr)*
- *June 3: GeoPlatform Dashboard & How to Make Content Public (2 hrs)*
- *June 17: StoryMaps (1 hr)*

Sessions start at 10 am Pacific Time

(use [time.gov](#) to find your local time)

To Join the sessions, use a computer or mobile device to [access the Microsoft Teams meeting](#):

Meeting ID: 258 364 219 102
Passcode: 6madh3

Contact: kean.kaitlin@epa.gov with any questions about the webinars.

EVENTS & TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

See our [online calendar](#) for more information about these events or to contact us if you would like to see your event included in a future newsletter.



Tribal Data Drop-In sessions

offer an informal space for Tribal professionals to ask questions, share ideas, and learn from TXG members and professional associates alike. The monthly 1-hour sessions cover a wide range of topics related to Tribal environmental data including R coding, general data management topics, Survey123, mapping, databases, and more. Bring your data-related question to an upcoming Tribal Data Drop-In session and join in a safe, pressure-free troubleshooting environment. See [details & links](#); no pre-registration is required.

Next Session: 2/15/24

EPA's Exchange Network Forum

is a monthly series that aims to provide information on the Exchange Network, a community-driven effort that works to improve data sharing for informing decision-making that protects people and the environment. The US EPA hosts the Forum as a venue to discuss how to improve and better use the Exchange Network's services and partnerships to share information among EPA, States, and Tribes. The Forum provides an opportunity for Exchange Network partners to: Learn about important Exchange Network information and updates. Share challenges and opportunities to improve the Exchange Network's collaborative model, communication channels, and technical framework. Learn

about innovative ways EPA, States and Tribes are using the Exchange Network. The Forum will meet the second Thursday of every month via Zoom. You can [register and access links to previous session recordings](#).

Next Forum: 2/8/24

NASA Online Training Courses

Check out NASA's website for free on-demand trainings on Earth Observations ranging from disaster risk modeling, climate risk assessment, and monitoring water quality using remote sensing.

OTHER UPCOMING EVENTS:

- **Tribal Air Quality Office**
Hours: dates and topics vary, see website for details.
- **Alaska Forum on the Environment:** February 5-9th; Anchorage, AK (and virtually).
- **Southwest Tribal Clean Water Act Training:** March 4-7th, 2024; Albuquerque, NM.
- **South Central Climate Resilience Forum:** April 2-4; Dallas, TX.
- **Indigenous Data Sovereignty (IDSov) and Indigenous Data Governance (IDGov) Summit: Building Action and Power:** April 11-12th, 2024; Tucson, AZ.
- **National Tribal Forum on Air Quality:** May 6-9, 2024; Cherokee, North Carolina.
- **Tribal Lands and Environment Forum:** August 12-15, 2024; Eugene, Oregon.



EXCHANGE NETWORK UPDATES

Reinvigoration Effort Continues with Tribal Engagement Meetings

For over two decades, the Exchange Network has served as a platform for innovation and collaboration, enabling technology systems that support standardized data sharing and improved access. As technology and best practices have changed, the Exchange Network did too, but change is accelerating and the Exchange Network needs a renewed vision and dedicated champions to bring that vision into the future.

Exchange Network leaders from EPA, Tribes, States, and Territories have initiated discussions on how to reinvigorate and improve the core elements of the Exchange Network: collaboration, technology, and communication. Several meetings of various EN partners and support organizations have occurred over the past six months, the latest of which was held in November and hosted by the Penobscot Indian Nation. The focus of the meeting was improving Tribal engagement, and the agenda was led by representatives from the Tribal Exchange Network Group (TXG), who will continue to provide updates for Tribes on opportunities to be involved and ways to stay informed. For questions or more information, contact TXG@tribalexchangenetwork.org.

TRIBAL DATA IN THE NEWS

[NIH Seeks to Address Health Disparities in Indian Country using Improved Data Sharing and Access](#) Friday, December 1, 2023

The National Institutes of Health (NIH) recently launched the RADx Tribal Data Repository: Data for Indigenous Implementations, Interventions, and Innovations (RADx TDR: D4I), which has been developed to address the disparities recognized in American Indian and Alaska Native communities. RADx TDR: D4I will establish a data repository for researchers and their collaborators interested in working with RADx data provided by research participants to better understand and address the impact of COVID-19 and other health disparities, and inform decision makers and policy developments to address current and future pandemic scenarios. Specific activities will include education and training programs on best practices for responsible data sharing and access, and constructing a secure repository to support data storage, access, harmonization, and monitored sharing of data related to COVID-19 testing and vaccination; all activities will be consistent with Tribal data sovereignty principles.

RESOURCES

[EPA Grants Trainings Available](#)

EPA is pleased to announce the availability of several new and updated training resources for grant applicants and recipients: NEW—Learn how to Register in [SAM.gov](#) and [Grants.gov](#) to apply for EPA grants.

Aimed to help you register your organization in SAM.gov, create a profile in Grants.gov, this training will help you prepare work plans, budgets, and budget narratives for EPA grants. EPA Grants Management Training for Applicants and Recipients introduces key aspects of the grant life cycle starting with preparing an application through closing out a grant.

[EPA Office of Research and Development \(ORD\) Tools & Resources Webinar Series](#)

See all past and upcoming webinars hosted by the EPA's Office of Research and Development including topics such as: food waste, PFAS, air sensors, wildfire smoke preparedness and more.

[EPA Drinking Water Webinars](#)

This free webinar series communicates the latest information on solutions for challenges facing small drinking water systems. EPA's Small Drinking Water Systems Webinar Series is typically held on the last Tuesday of the month from 2 to 3:30 p.m. ET. Preview the monthly topics listed for 2024 and see past recordings.

[E-Enterprise Bulletin](#)

Check out this periodic newsletter from the E-Enterprise for the Environment initiative that provides updates on current E-Enterprise activities, leadership, and related news. The latest issue from December features more information on recent EN reinvigoration activities and EE strategic planning updates.

January Reader Poll

What are your typical data management challenges?

Use the code or link to reply



[BIT.LY/3P4S5QB](https://bit.ly/3P4S5QB)

[Environmental Data Management Best Practices Toolkit](#)

The Interstate Technology Resource Council (ITRC) has prepared an extensive online resource guide for scientists working with environmental agencies. Sections include: Planning, Data Quality, Data Exchange, Traditional Ecological Knowledge, Public Communications and more!

[Data Management Videos for Tribes](#)

View recordings from recent workshops, conferences, and webinars conducted for Tribal staff that provide case studies from Tribal programs, lessons on using software tools such as Excel and StoryMaps, and general data management principles. Browse over a dozen channels of archived content and stay tuned for updates!

Check out the TXG's new website!

tribalexchangenetwork.org



Empowering Tribal Environmental Professionals through data.



JOB & INTERNSHIP BOARD

[Summer Internships, The Institute for Tribal Environmental Professionals \(ITEP\)](#)

The Institute for Tribal Environmental Professionals (ITEP) hosts various internship programs for college students across air, water, and climate change topics. These positions were created with a focus on recruiting and mentoring Indigenous students.

Summer 2024 Student Internship applications due February 1st, 2024.

[Tribal College and University \(TCU\) Cyberinfrastructure Facilitator, American Indian Higher Education Consortium \(AIHEC\)](#)

The Cyberinfrastructure (CI) Facilitator, as part of the AIHEC Cyberinfrastructure Team) will engage directly with the 37 Tribal Colleges and Universities nationwide focusing on the integration of CI resources and IT staff support into the campuses' academic and research activities.

Salary: Unknown

Applications due: ASAP

[EPA's Office of Pesticide Programs Seeks Volunteers for Youth Coloring Book Contest](#)

EPA Region 6 and the [Tribal Pesticide Program Council's Pollinator Protection Working Group](#) will collaborate with Tribes across the country to develop a youth coloring book that promotes themes of pollinator protection, integrated pest management, environmental stewardship, and climate change through the lens of the Tribal World View. The final product is intended to be translated into various Tribal languages and distributed to Tribal youth across the country.

Volunteers from all 10 EPA Regions are being sought to serve on a working group that will outline the story board for the coloring book. This will include identifying which pollinators to showcase, native plants, native land management practices, and native cultural practices that align with traditional land management methods.

Anyone interested should contact mogren.chrissy@epa.gov by February 1, 2024.

HAVE AN UPDATE
OR STORY IDEA?



Email us at
TXG@tribalexchangenetwork.org

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meet our members, and learn more
about how we support Tribes :

www.tribalexchangenetwork.org

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