



Tribal Exchange Network News



December 2019

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Inaugural Event for the 2019 Tribal Environmental Data & Technology Academy Brings Knowledge-Transfer to the Forefront

Water and air quality data, fisheries and wildlife data, natural resource and land management data. There's a lot of data that tribes collect, and with more of it accessible each day via the Exchange Network and other web-based data services, there is a strong desire among tribal staff to learn the skills necessary to manage that data on their terms.



Participants gained new knowledge and skills through instructional material and completing activities.

The Tribal Environmental Data & Technology Academy, or "TribalDATA," convened November 5-7, 2019 on the Northern Arizona University campus in Flagstaff, Arizona. It was developed by the Exchange Network's Tribal Governance Group (TGG) and the Institute for Tribal Environmental Professionals (ITEP), in response to a recent assessment of tribal environmental data management concerns and needs. The goal was to better equip attendees to harness the power of data to inform their programs and help enhance their environmental protection capacity. Throughout the event, new skills were developed, datasets explored, and knowledge gained.

With 40 tribal professionals attending to learn, and more than a dozen professionals from tribal and other programs providing mentoring and other support, the Academy attendees chose between workshops on readily available technology solutions such as GIS maps, database systems, and open-source tools such as R and OpenRefine. After the workshops concluded, attendees had the opportunity to connect with each other and with invited NAU students and staff, during an open forum session on the final day. This format allowed attendees to build relationships with, and learn from, each other, and proved to be an important component to the overall event.



Participants and instructors in the discussion and one-on-one sessions.

Despite some challenges with regard to (ahem!) technology, the interactive learning approach and opportunities for mentoring and information-sharing that occurred resulted in the majority of attendees coming away with a better overall understanding of the topics presented and new professional connections to help them accomplish their environmental data management objectives. Attendees gained confidence by seeing how others deal with the challenges of data

Important Dates:

E-Enterprise National Meeting (EE2020): May 12-14, 2020

For More Information:

[Tribes & the Exchange Network](#)

A resource for tribes interested in information and assistance on Exchange Network topics.

[Exchange Network](#)

The Exchange Network's main website with information on technical resources, data partners, and governance.

[E-Enterprise](#)

The E-Enterprise for the Environment initiative website has information on current projects and activities, and governance membership lists.

[EPA's EN Grants](#)

EN grant solicitation information, grant award history, and key EPA contacts.

[Institute for Tribal Environmental Professionals](#)

The Institute for Tribal Environmental Professionals' website contains information on training and other services provided, including national conferences, tribal partnership efforts, and more.

management, and that using technology can help answer the questions they have of their data and make better sense of the data they collect.

Feedback from the attendees generally echoed those of the sentiments shared by these commenters:

- > *It was a very good workshop. I hope we have another to build off of what we have learned.*
- > *Workshops should be longer - 3 days instead of 2.*
- > *I would not mind an additional day of hands on training. So useful!!*
- > *It was useful to have it set up with workshops and time for discussions and working with their own data.*

Based on the feedback received, and observations during the event, every indication is that tribes found the information useful, and want even more exposure to topics presented, as well as to the peers, mentors, and other professionals that can support them. With this evidence in hand, the TGG and ITEP plan to host more events for tribes like this, and continue to focus on helping to build the fundamental skills and technical understanding important for further supporting tribal sovereignty and informed environmental decision-making.

Tribal Governance Group Welcomes New Member

The Tribal Governance Group (TGG) is made up of nine professionals working on various aspects of the EN and whose primary purpose is to ensure representation of tribal perspectives and issues in the overall EN governance structure. The TGG works to foster and enhance tribal participation in the Network, and to provide mentoring and guidance to other tribes interested in opportunities available through the EN. In September 2019, the TGG welcomed a new member, Lauren Fox.

Lauren Fox - Director, Pamunkey Indian Tribal Resource Center

Lauren is the Director at the Pamunkey Indian Tribal Resource Center in King William, Virginia. The Pamunkey Indian Tribe was the first federally recognized tribe in Virginia. Lauren currently manages grants through the Administration for Native Americans, the US Environmental Protection Agency, and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. She is also helping the Tribe establish the first tribal environmental program in EPA Region 3. Lauren is working to establish a Geographic Information System program for the tribe. She is a member of the E-Enterprise Leadership Council, Women in the Environment, the PITR Natural Resource Management Working Group, and the PITR Cultural Resource Management Working Group to name a few.

Contact Lauren at lauren.fox@pamunkey.org.

Interested in learning more about the Exchange Network Tribal Governance Group? Click [HERE](#) to learn more!

Have expertise to share? Become a mentor to other tribes! Contact [ITEP](#), or submit the short online form [HERE](#) to sign up to be a mentor; we'll profile you on our website so tribes in need of relevant guidance or assistance know where to turn.

In need of assistance with an EN project? We can help! Visit our website, download the [EN Mentorship Request Form](#), and submit the completed form to [ITEP](#).

Quality Review and Exchange System for Tribes...aka QREST!

QREST (pronounced "crest") is a new collaborative effort led by the Tribal Air Monitoring and Support (TAMS) Center and tribal representatives. QREST is an open-source, cloud software solution that will provide tools to address the challenges of managing tribal air quality data. It will be available for tribal programs throughout the United States in the summer of 2020.

- A few overarching goals of QREST are to:
- > Provide small tribal agencies with the ability to generate legally-defensible data and build tribal capacity,
 - > Support tribes with data analysis and reporting by pushing out industry and federal changes to all participating tribes at once, and
 - > Enable more valid data availability to other agencies and EPA.



[Watch the QREST progress report video!](#) For more information on using QREST, contact Melinda Ronca-Battista at Melinda.Ronca-Battista@nau.edu.

Upcoming Events

<<>> **2.5 GHz Rural Tribal Window.** This window is a unique opportunity for Tribes in rural areas to directly access unassigned spectrum over their Tribal lands, subject to buildout requirements. The 2.5 GHz band is suitable for both mobile coverage and fixed point-to-point uses, and is currently used to provide broadband service by legacy educational licensees and commercial providers that lease the spectrum. Depending on your needs, it can play an important role in the deployment of broadband and other advanced communications services on your Tribal lands.

The dates and procedures for the Rural Tribal Window have not yet been established. Once the dates and procedures are announced, they will be posted at the [FCC Rural Tribal Window website](#). A free informational workshop will take place on December 19, 2019. Register [HERE](#).

<<>> **Air Sensors International Conference, May 12-15, 2020 in Pasadena, CA.** ASIC will bring together stakeholders from academia, government, communities, and commercial interests to promote and advance air pollution sensors, improve the data quality from these sensors, expand the pollutants measured, and foster community involvement in monitoring air quality. For more information, visit asic.aqrc.ucdavis.edu/.

<<>> **The [2020 E-Enterprise National Meeting \(EE2020\)](#) will be held in Chicago, IL from May 12-14, 2020!** EE2020 is a meeting for the environmental protection community that creates opportunities to connect with other community members, share successes and challenges, and learn about best practices in environmental protection. The meeting Chairs have announced the launch of the [EE2020 meeting website](#) and the opening of the [EE2020 Call for Meeting Content](#). To submit your abstract or idea for EE2020, please [visit the meeting website](#) for complete details.

>**Need travel funding?** For Tribal Agencies: The Institute for Tribal Environmental Professionals (ITEP) will provide a limited number of travel scholarships to eligible individuals representing Federally recognized Tribes and/or eligible Tribal organizations. Support for airfare, mileage, lodging, and per diem is available. Funding will be allocated on a first-come, first-served basis. For more information or to request a scholarship, please contact ITEP's Lydia Scheer at lydia.scheer@nau.edu.

Webinars and Recorded Presentations

<<>> E-Enterprise held a permitting and compliance webinar with the Arizona Department of Environmental Quality (ADEQ). This webinar took place on October 29, 2019. Click [HERE](#) to view the recording.

<<>> The [Community Multiscale Air Quality \(CMAQ\) Modeling System](#): open-source development project of the U.S. EPA that consists of a suite of programs for conducting air quality model simulations. CMAQ combines current knowledge in atmospheric science and air quality modeling, multi-processor computing techniques, and an open-source framework to deliver fast, technically sound estimates of ozone, particulates, toxics and acid deposition. Click [HERE](#) for past and upcoming webinars.

<<>> [Water Research Program Webinar Series](#) EPA's Office of Research and Development hosts this webinar series to share current research activities and research results.

<<>> [Enforcement and Compliance History Online \(ECHO\) Training](#) The ECHO webinar series offers introductory and advanced demonstration and navigation tutorials for users. Webinars are delivered every six months. Shorter video tutorials are also offered [HERE](#).

<<>> **Working with statistics:** Visit [Practical Stats](#) for environmental science/natural resource statistical training. The site offers free webinars, in-person courses, and other resources. For courses schedules or tips on environmental stats, contact ask@practicalstats.com with questions or to be added to their newsletter.

<<>> **EPA's Office of Research & Development (ORD): Tools & Resources Webinar Series highlights new science and technology.** Representatives of government environment and health agencies, community leaders, and others interested in learning about EPA tools and resources available to help inform decision-making will find informative monthly resources on topics ranging from wildfire smoke emissions to cyanobacteria to green infrastructure. Check out the archived webinars and check for announcements on upcoming topics: [HERE](#).

<<>> **New to AQS (or need a refresher)?** Check out ITEP's **AQS Fast-Track** videos—14 short video tutorials designed to get you entering data into AQS fast! Find them online [HERE](#).

Funding

<<>> **Coming soon: the Exchange Network Grant Solicitation!** The EN Grant Program provides funding to states, territories, and federally recognized Indian tribes to support the development of the National Environmental Information Exchange Network (EN). The primary outcome expected from EN assistance agreements is improved access to, and exchange of, high-quality

environmental data from public and private sector sources. For updates, more information, and previous grantees, visit the [Exchange Network Grant Program](#).

<<>> [National Telecommunications and Information Administration \(NTIA\) Comprehensive Guide to Federal Broadband Funding](#). The searchable database, provided by the NTIA, spans federal programs who provide funding for state and local governments, schools, libraries, small businesses, and other community institutions that are interested in expanding broadband access. Applicants can search for programs by agency, program purpose, and eligible recipients. Other programs offer grants and loans for targeted purposes or specific regions of the country.

Bits and Bytes

<<>> U.S. EPA [Smoke Sense Data Visualization Tool](#) Now Available. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) announces a new online tool called the “Smoke Sense Data Visualization Tool,” which provides information on how the Smoke Sense app is being used by citizen scientists to report the impacts of wildfire smoke.

<<>> [Tribal Technology Assessment: The State of Internet Service on Tribal Lands](#)
The American Indian Policy Institute (AIPI) at Arizona State University (ASU) conducted the assessment to collect information from residents of tribal reservations to determine what levels of Internet access they had and what types of devices they using to access it. The study also identified potential barriers to access, such as the lack of availability or its unaffordability for residents to purchase.

<<>> [TribalNet Fall 2019: Publication for Technology-Minded Professionals in Tribal Government](#). The [TribalNet magazine](#) is a technology-focused resource, published twice a year and is available for those working at and with tribal organizations, health centers, casinos, and enterprises nationwide. The Fall 2019 issue is their 20th Anniversary edition.

<<>> [Download TestIt, the Rural Broadband Mapping App](#). The National Association of Counties (NACo), Rural Local Initiatives Support Corporation (Rural LISC), Rural Community Assistance Partnership (RCAP), and National Association of Development Organizations (NADO) created a mobile app that harnesses grassroots advocacy by empowering individual users to accurately identify areas with low or no internet connectivity. This data is aggregated to identify gaps in broadband coverage, help guide advocacy for adequate funding, and inform decision-making at federal, state, and local levels.

<<>> [Our Nation’s Air: Status and Trends Through 2018](#). The report, created by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, summarizes the nation's air quality status and trends through 2018.

<<>> *In the news...* [The Navajo Nation is getting addresses, thanks to an open-source mapping program used in urban India](#)

<<>> *E-Enterprise Publishes “Essential Info” Document*. E-Enterprise recently published a second edition of the [Essential Information for New Members of the E-Enterprise Governance Groups](#), a core recommended reading for all E-Enterprise members, especially if they have recently joined the community. The document provides an overview of E-Enterprise principles, goals, projects, member expectations, and more.

<<>> *The Internet of Water (IoW)* is a project that envisions a world engaged in sustainable water resource management and stewardship enabled by open, shared, and integrated water data and information. The IoW is building a dynamic and voluntary network of communities and institutions to connect data producers, hubs, and users to enable the discovery, accessibility, and usability of water data and information. Visit the IoW website [HERE](#) or [join their mailing list](#).

<<>> *Web-based Data Discovery and Analysis Tool for STORET available on the WQ Portal!*
Check out the Water Quality Portal for the web-based tool for easily reviewing and assessing your WQX data. Complete instructions and tool download are available here: [HERE](#).

<<>> *Quality Assurance Handbook and Guidance Documents for Citizen Science Projects*. EPA’s Handbook for Citizen Science Quality Assurance and Documentation is for organizations that are starting or growing a citizen science project, and where transparency in the scientific methods for collecting the data are central to the outcome of the project. The Handbook has two companion documents, Examples and Templates. To view these, click [HERE](#).

<<>> *Confused about QA/QC? Staring down a QAPP?* ITEP’s new online training site boasts several free courses and modules on Quality Assurance fundamentals, and writing a QAPP, with straight-forward lessons relevant to a wide variety of environmental monitoring and data collection activities. Check out these FREE courses [HERE](#).

*****Tribal**Consultation**Opportunities*****

Find details and supporting documentation on current consultation actions at the [TCOTS website](#).

<<>> Topic: Implementation of the Office of Research and Development's (ORD) Research. ORD is conducting a consultation and coordination process with federally recognized tribes on the implementation of ORD's research. ORD provides the data, tools, and information that form the sound scientific foundation the Agency relies on to fulfill its mission to protect the environment and safeguard public health. Program, regional, state, federal and tribal partners are ORD's primary stakeholders.

To initiate the consultation, ORD has proposed charge questions on specific products associated with four of the six ORD research programs:

- > Air and Energy
- > Chemical Safety for Sustainability
- > Safe and Sustainable Water Resources
- > Sustainable and Healthy Communities

ORD will host the second and final national tribal conference call and webinar on December 11, 2019 3:00-4:30 pm, ET; Webinar link:

<https://epawebconferencing.acms.com/ordresearchconsultationcall2/>, Conference Call-in: (202) 991-0477, Conference Call ID: 9520960#

EPA's timeline for the consultation and coordination period is November 1, 2019 to December 31, 2019. The EPA contact is Monica Rodia, rodia.monica@epa.gov, 202-564-8322.

<<>> Topic: Proposed Implementation of the Tribal Set-Aside of the Water Infrastructure Improvements for the Nation (WIIN) Act Section 2107 Drinking Water Grant Program. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is initiating consultation and coordination with federally recognized Indian Tribes to obtain input on the establishment of a new tribal drinking water grant program, as authorized by the 2016 Water Infrastructure Improvements for the Nation (WIIN) Act. The WIIN Act addresses, supports, and improves America's drinking water infrastructure, which promotes public health and the protection of the environment. Included in the WIIN Act is a new drinking water grant program, which will include a tribal allotment to support access to safe drinking water in tribal schools and child care centers.

EPA's timeline for the consultation and coordination period is November 25 to December 30, 2019. The EPA contact is Dona M. Harris, harris.dona@epa.gov.

Sign up for TCOTS emails: Stay up-to-date on current and upcoming EPA consultation opportunities for tribal governments. Sign up for the Tribal Consultation Opportunities Tracking System (TCOTS) email list by sending a request to: Join-epa_tcots@lists.epa.gov. You can also view current initiatives on the [TCOTS website](#).

Contact Us!

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Have events, announcements, ideas or stories to share?

Interested in a particular topic you want to hear more about?

Other questions or thoughts?

Please contact us!