



Tribal Exchange Network News



March 2018

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Important Dates:

April 13-14, 2018
E-Enterprise Leadership Council Meeting - Chicago, IL

May 14-17, 2018
National Tribal Forum on Air Quality - Duluth, MN

August 13-16, 2018
Tribal Lands & Environment Forum - Spokane, WA

October 23-25, 2018
EE2018 National Meeting - Dallas, TX

Tribal Conference Brings Tribes, EPA, and States Together to Listen, Learn

Nearly 100 tribal, EPA, state, and other public and private partners recently convened for the 2018 Tribal Exchange Network Conference in Tucson, Arizona. This year's event highlighted many relevant tribal and community-based projects, as well as other current topics in the Exchange Network and E-Enterprise arena. Working effectively with data to understand its value and turn it into meaningful information was a recurring theme throughout the sessions. The conference provided numerous opportunities for attendees to interact with others, and offered resources and solutions to help attendees identify innovative ways to address unique challenges. Participants valued these connections and found inspiration from others working to address environmental management through data and technology.

In noting that approximately half of the attendees were new to the EN arena, conference planners focused on shaping the agenda with topics and sessions relevant to individuals with a wide variety of background experience. Through several short, interactive workshops as well as informal discussions, mentoring, and one-on-one conversations, the agenda topics ranged from grants and funding, Quality Assurance Project Plans, data management and analysis concepts, and geospatial tools. A poster session allowed numerous organizations to share information about their current activities and projects in a casual setting. These elements not only helped to develop the network of individuals who are working together to protect their communities, but also instrumental in helping those individuals discuss challenges, potential solutions, and new opportunities that are relevant to both newcomers and the experienced alike.

Victoria Flowers, Oneida Nation, honored for work in Exchange Network



Victoria Flowers, 2018

In a fitting conclusion to the conference, the EN Tribal Governance Group (TGG) continued its tradition of recognizing the outstanding contributions of individuals working with tribes to further their involvement in the Exchange Network. This year's honoree was Victoria "Vicki" Flowers, Environmental Compliance Specialist for the Oneida Nation. In her work with one of the leading tribal environmental compliance programs for the country, Vicki has encountered many instances where there was a need for a robust data management and developed an appreciation for the value of a well-designed data system that provides useful information to decision-makers. Vicki brings an incomparable passion for working towards understanding the power of data and benefits of sound data management approaches, and for proactively using tribal data to serve tribal purposes and build tribal capacity. Vicki's

enthusiasm and commitment to environmental protection and data stewardship are prime examples of a tribal professional working in the spirit of the well-deserved award. Congratulations Vicki!

Tribal Capacity & Needs Assessment on Data Management

The TGG recently released its Tribal Capacity & Needs Assessment questionnaire to gauge current capacity and future needs of tribal programs related to data management, collection, and use. The questionnaire has received a number of responses already, however the TGG is interested in obtaining as broad a spectrum of input from as many tribes as possible to ensure recommendations and strategies are informed by robust, representative data. As funding for tribal programs continues to shrink and become more competitive, this information is more important than ever. It will aid the TGG as it continues to advocate for increased funding and resources for tribal programs that are not only responsive to tribal needs and constraints, but

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

support tribal goals and priorities related to the Exchange Network. Input received will help the TGG to communicate the need for adequate support, and identify appropriate technical solutions and financial resources that sustain tribal environmental programs into the future. To access the needs assessment and submit your responses, visit the online form here:

http://nau.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_b42EtWFq3AU7IEp

Robert Holden, Deputy Director of NCAI, Retires

Deputy Director for the National Congress of American Indians, Mr. Robert Holden recently retired from his post with NCAI, as well as from his advisory role with the Exchange Network's Tribal Governance Group (TGG). Mr. Holden was instrumental in the establishment of the TGG, a staunch advocate for tribes to have a representative voice and seat at the table, in this case, the table was of Exchange Network's shared governance model. Established in 2002, the Exchange Network's governing boards included state and EPA representatives, but tribes struggled to maintain a voice until the TGG was established in 2005, and formalized through cooperative agreements from EPA to support tribal involvement on a regular basis. Mr. Holden was instrumental in establishing the TGG and providing it with not only the foundation, but also continued leadership and activism that enabled it to continue to thrive today. As a tribute to Mr. Holden's contributions and tireless support of tribal sovereignty, the TGG established the Robert Holden Tribal Environmental Exchange Network Achievement Award, which will be given out annually during the Tribal Exchange Network Conference. The 2018 awardee was Victoria Flowers from the Oneida Nation (see above article).

EE2018: Shared Services, Shared Stories, Shared Successes

EN2018 is now EE2018! [The E-Enterprise National Meeting \(powered by the Exchange Network\) will be held October 23-25, 2018 in Dallas, Texas.](#) EE2018 attendees will connect, collaborate, and learn more about the innovative work happening across the environmental protection enterprise. EE2018 continues the longstanding series of national meetings held by the Exchange Network, re-branded to reinforce the deep connection between E-Enterprise and the Exchange Network and to continue promoting integrated conversations around process improvement, program modernization, advanced technology, and data management.

The theme for EE2018 is Shared Stories, Shared Services, Shared Successes. The Exchange Network & E-Enterprise initiatives focus on sharing and reusing resources to drive efficiency in environmental management and business. Success stories highlighting current efforts, newly forged partnerships and future endeavors will be explored through various sessions. The agenda is currently under development, with state, EPA, and tribal participants chairing the planning committee for the meeting. If you are interested in more information about the event, or would like to propose an idea for a session or presentation, please contact Kurt Rakouskas at ECOS: krakouskas@ecos.org.

USDA Rural Broadband Grants

Tribes, state/local governments and other entities are encouraged to submit applications for the US Department of Agriculture's Community Connect grant program, which helps fund broadband deployment into rural communities where it may not be economically viable for private sector providers to deliver service. The Rural Utilities Service (RUS) will host two webinars (April 5 and April 10) focused on the Community Connect Grant Program. These webinars will inform participants about the major eligibility and regulatory requirements of the program and will provide detailed guidance on how to submit a successful application. Rural areas that lack any existing broadband speed of at least 10 Mbps downstream and 1 Mbps upstream are eligible. The Community Connect grant webpage provides more information on the upcoming webinars, as well as eligible areas and other requirements:

<https://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/community-connect-grants>.

Bits and Bytes

<<>> **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](#).

<<>> **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](#).

<<>> **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](#).

<<>> **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](#).

<<>> **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](#).

<<>> **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.

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

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

<<>> **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](#).

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

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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!*