

2016 Tribal Exchange Network Conference

SUMMARY REPORT

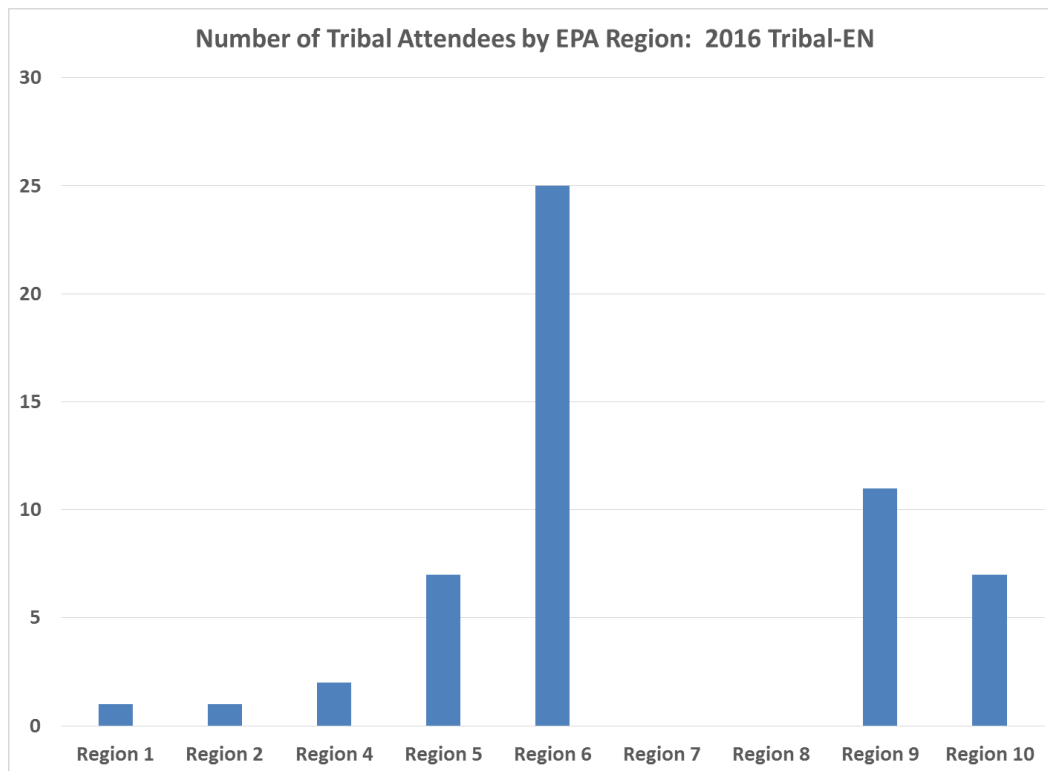
The **2016 Tribal Exchange Network Conference (Tribal-EN)**, was held February 9-10, 2016 in Albuquerque, New Mexico. This year's Conference was attended by 75 people representing 40 tribal organizations and a dozen public and private entities. A summary of attendance data and conference feedback follows.

Attendance Profile:

- 75 attendees (54 tribal representatives)
- 40 tribal organizations
- 7 public agencies/offices
- 9 private entities/organizations
- 7 EPA Regions represented by tribes

Attendees are depicted by EPA Region in the chart below; seven regions were represented by tribal attendees. Staff from EPA Headquarters (Office of Environmental Information, Office of the Chief Financial Officer, Office of Water) and EPA Regions 4, 5, and 9 also attended.

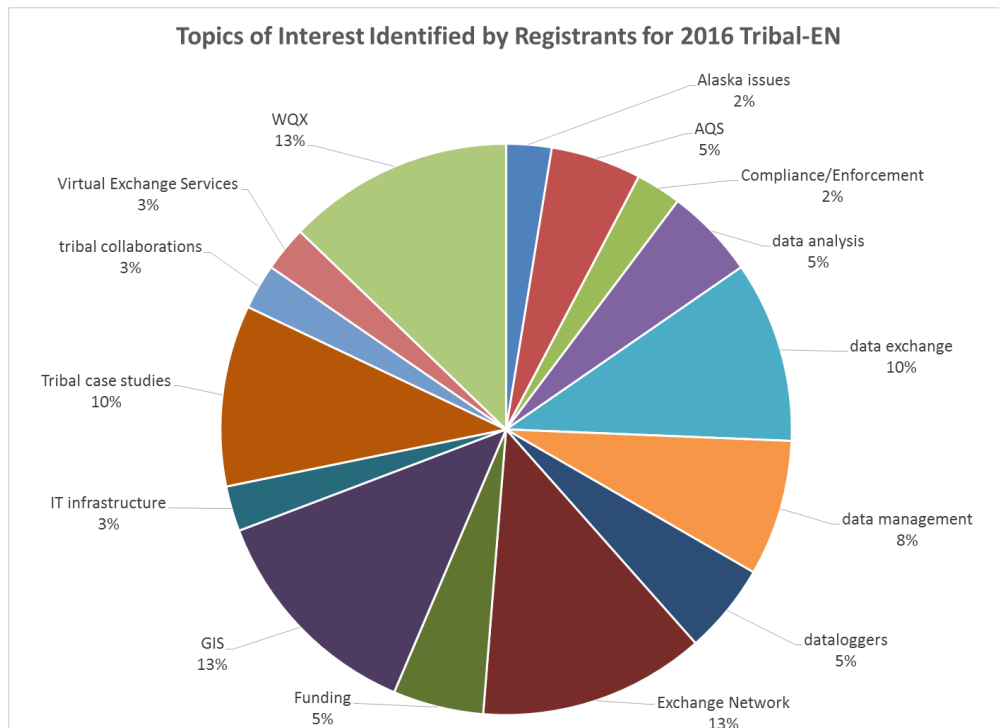
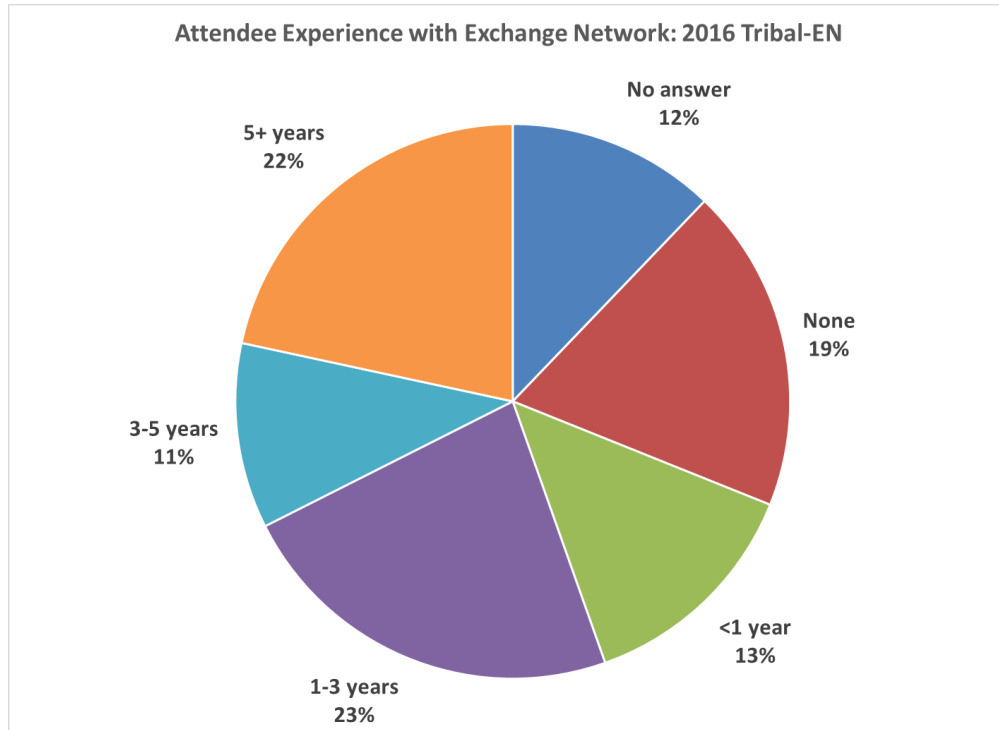
Despite administrative delays that impacted the opening of the online registration for the Conference, ITEP received 110 total registrants, however a number of individuals cancelled after registering. Various reasons were given at the time of cancellation; most cited unexpected work/schedule constraints that were beyond the scope of conference planners.



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Nearly **one-third** of the attendees had little to no experience prior to the Conference and attended to learn more about the Exchange Network, how to fund projects, and hear what other tribes have accomplished. The charts below depict the years of experience with the EN activities as well as areas of interest identified by conference attendees when they registered.



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Conference Agenda and Attendee Feedback:

The conference agenda boasted a variety of presentations as well as pre-conference training sessions, and a Poster/Vendor Reception designed to help foster networking among conference attendees. Overall, attendees expressed an appreciation for the tribal case studies, the EPA sessions and the interactive elements of the conference, and requested more of these at future events.

Highlights of the agenda included:

- Pre-conference sessions
 - 3 vendor-sponsored workshops
 - a visit to a nearby tribal restoration project site,
 - an introductory EN/EE-101 presentation.
- Keynote Address by Ann Dunkin, CIO for EPA's Office of Environmental Information
- 10 presentations delivered by tribal representatives
- 3 EPA presentations focused on E-Enterprise
- a panel session on EN grants, with panelists from states, tribes, and EPA
- a listening session by EPA-OEI representatives
- an interactive roundtable session to foster networking and communication



Attendees at the Sandia Pueblo restoration site visit, February 2016

Attendees generally noted the following as the most positive aspect of the Conference:

- Learning more about the EN;
- Networking with tribes and other attendees;
- Having a presence by EPA;
- Hearing tribal experiences, challenges, successes.

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When asked “What would you like to see *more* of at this Conference?” attendees (via conference evaluation form) identified the following top five choices:

- More basic EN information for newbies;
- More information on EN grants, funding opportunities;
- More topics outside of air/water monitoring projects (eg. wild rice, wetlands, etc.);
- More workshops and site visits;
- More broad, program-specific experts from EPA.

Other comments and suggestions included:

- *The showing and individual contributions made by the EPA staff and managers was amazing and really added to the conference because we could ask questions and get answers (usually) on the spot. It was obvious that some of them lacked experience with tribes, but what a better way to gain that experience than being present during a tribal event. Thank you!*
- *List a summary of past projects and possible future projects that fall under the EN. This might help tribes think about what they might be able to apply for.*

A detailed agenda and many of the presentations delivered are available through the Tribes and the Exchange Network website (www.tribalexchangenetwork.org).