January Meeting

CWA Section 106 Tribal Guidance Revision Update (Jennifer Wintersteen, Region 8; Robyn Delehanty, OWM; Laura Shumway, OWOW)

EPA plans to open consultation on the CWA Section 106 Tribal Guidance Revisions early in the new year and request comment on the workgroup's recommendations for the revision. This section will provide an update to the NTWC on the status of the Section 106 Tribal Guidance revision consultation and the parameter fact sheet status.

Drinking Water Infrastructure Needs Assessment Survey (Sam Russell, OGWDW)

Sam Russell will join to discuss the recently initiated survey of tribal Public Water Systems under the Drinking Water Infrastructure Needs Survey and Assessment. For 2021, the survey will include 200 public water systems representing a statistical subset of systems serving tribal populations. The survey will inform Congress on the needs within tribal communities and help drive allocations of EPA's Drinking Water Infrastructure Grants – Tribal Set-Aside program.

Additional Updates and Reminders

- **Funding Opportunity: FY20 and 21 Tribal Wetland Program Development Grants** *Wetland Program Development Grants assist state, tribal, local government agencies and interstate and intertribal entities in developing or refining programs which protect, manage, and restore wetlands. On November 3, 2020 EPA announced a Request for Applications soliciting applications from eligible applicants to develop or refine tribal wetland programs. Tribes and intertribal consortia are eligible to apply under this announcement no later than January 15, 2021. For additional information about the grant solicitation, please visit: https://www.epa.gov/wetlands/tribal-wetland-program-development-grant-request-applications*
- **Funding Opportunity: FY21 Tribal 319 Competitive Grant Request for Applications (RFA)** *On November 13, 2020, EPA posted the FY2021 Tribal Clean Water Act Section 319 Competitive Grant Request for Applications, announcement EPA-OW-OWOW-21-01 to the Current Grant Information page of EPA's Tribal NPS website. Funding available through the FY21 RFA is primarily targeted to support implementation of NPS best management practices (BMPs) to control sources of NPS pollution. The application deadline is January 14, 2021. Applications must be submitted electronically to EPA through Grants.gov by 11:59pm Eastern Time in order to be considered for funding.*

- **Wildland Fire Research: Tribal Listening Sessions**
  EPA Office of Research and Development's (ORD) Air and Energy National Research Program invites tribes to participate in the Wildland Fire Research Listening Session!
  This session will include:
  - A short overview of current ORD researchon wildland fires.
  - Listening sessions for tribes to informORD's update to its Wildland Fire Researchplan.
  - Overview of key resources currentlyavailable to tribes (AirNow Fire and SmokeMap Pilot Project, Smoke Sense, SmokeReady Toolbox for Wildfires, WildfireSmoke Guide, etc.).

Listening sessions will take place on January 26th from 2 PM to 4 PM EST and February 17th from 2 PM to 4 PM EST.

February Meeting

Pending Treatment as a State Applications (Andy Byrne, AIEO)

Andy will provide an update on EPA's process regarding Clean Water Act TAS applications.

CWA Section 106 Tribal Guidance Revision Update (Jennifer Wintersteen, Region 8; Robyn Delehanty, OWM; Laura Shumway, OWOW)

EPA has opened consultation on the CWA Section 106 Tribal Guidance Revisions and request comment on the workgroup's recommendations for the revision. This consultation will run through March 15th. This section will provide an update to the NTWC on the status of the Section 106 Tribal Guidance revision consultation and the parameter fact sheet status.

USDA Resources to Advance Tribal Nonpoint Source Work (Steve Epting, OWOW)

The section 319 funding provided by EPA through the National NPS Program will not usually be sufficient to address all the NPS pollution problems on tribal lands. The tribes having the most success with improving water quality are frequently those that are able to leverage other resources, including technical assistance and funding, to support their NPS program work. Tribal programs enlist the support of various agencies from federal, state and local governments; universities; nonprofit organizations and private businesses. The EPA supports tribes by compiling information on other programs and agencies that can help advance NPS program work.

According to the USDA, the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) has 45 full-time and 30 part-time field offices on Indian lands, totaling approximately 150 NRCS tribal liaisons serving federally recognized tribes. These staff serve as a critical link to USDA funding and technical assistance. In the last five years, the USDA has been cited as a key partner in more than 25 percent of tribal 319 competitive grant projects. Given that a number of tribes have successfully partnered with USDA, there is an opportunity to share lessons learned and educate the 200+ tribal NPS programs across the US about technical assistance and funding available through USDA programs.

This task is aimed at developing educational materials for tribal NPS staff to achieve the following outcomes:

- *Help tribal NPS programs understand the technical and financial resources available through USDA.*
- *Provide examples of how tribes have worked with USDA to address NPS pollution.*
- *Provide helpful tips to new tribal NPS staff on how to begin partnering with USDA.*

2013-2014 Rivers and Streams Assessment Report (Richard Mitchell, OWOW)

Richard Mitchell will discuss the release of the 2013-2014 National Rivers and Streams Assessment Report (NRSA Report), one of four National Aquatic Resource Surveys (NARS).

The NARS program is a collaborative effort of EPA, state, tribal and federal partners. Clean Water Act (CWA) Sections 104(a) and (b) collectively grant the EPA Administrator authority to investigate and report on water quality across the country. Under this authority, EPA collaborates with states, tribes, and other federal agencies to implement a consistent approach to monitoring at sites selected using a randomized design, and uses these data to generate cost-effective assessments of the extent of the nation's waters supporting CWA goals. NARS data also inform and benefit the national water quality inventory report that EPA prepares for Congress pursuant to CWA Section 305(b)(2). These surveys provide national and regional context to support the important water quality studies conducted by states, tribes, and other organizations to address local water quality priorities.

The Report, technical support document, results dashboard, data files, and a pre-publication Federal Register notice are available at: https://www.epa.gov/national-aquatic-resource-surveys/pre-publication-notice-availability-report-national-rivers-and Through the Federal Register Notice EPA is requesting comments on some of the analytical approaches used in the NRSA report, such as the setting of benchmarks used to interpret nutrient data. Click here to access the full NRSA 2013-14 Report.

Additional Updates and Reminders

- **Tribal Water Science Needs**

EPA OW is preparing to submit water research needs to ORD for the 2022 – 2026 ORD strategic plan. OST is coordinating with OW Program Offices, Regions, and some specific programs (such as the tribal program) to submit and rank research requests. Some existing water science needs will continue into the upcoming strategic plan. A powerpoint explaining the process and spreadsheet to submit research needs are attached to the meeting invite. If the NTWC has unique research needs that are not already reflected in the spreadsheet, please let Nate know prior to 3/15. If there are ongoing particular research projects that uniquely benefit tribal interests, and should be continued in the eyes of the Council, please let me know before 3/15 as well, and I will work to ensure that ORD is aware of the tribal interest in that particular research.

- **The FY21 Exchange Network Grant Solicitation Notice has been published on Grants.gov – Applications are due on March 31st, 2021.**

  The Fiscal Year (FY) 2021 Exchange Network (EN) Grant Program Solicitation Notice (SN) has been published to Grants.gov and is available here: https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/view-opportunity.html?oppId=331293. Applications are due to EPA by 11:59 PM Eastern Time, Wednesday, March 31, 2021. Additional guidance tools, including optional fillable templates, are available for applicants both on Grants.gov and on the EN website. Applicants are encouraged to review the new FY21 SN in full, as significant updates have been made since the FY20 version. Information on applicant webinars will be provided shortly.

- **Tribal Consultation Informational Webinar for the CWA Section 106 Tribal Guidance Revision – February 11th, 2:00 – 3:00 PM EST**

  EPA is preparing to revise the "Final Guidance on Awards of Grants to Indian Tribes under Section 106 of the Clean Water Act" to provide tribes with more accurate, comprehensive, and up-to-date information to support tribal water programs. EPA is initiating a consultation and coordination opportunity with federally recognized Indian tribes to inform the revision of the Guidance. The consultation and coordination opportunity will include two comment periods. The first comment period will remain open from January 13, 2021 – March 15, 2021 and will solicit input on the recommendations for the revision. EPA is hosting this webinar to inform tribes about the consultation and coordination opportunity and the overall revision process.

  This webinar will include:
  • An introduction to the revision process
  • An overview of the recommendations for the revision
  • How to provide comments and request government-to-government consultation
  • An opportunity to ask questions and provide initial feedback
  Register for the webinar here.

- **Managing Harmful Algal Blooms in Tribal Waters Webinar Series**
  March 10, 16, and 18, 2021; 10:00 am-12:30 pm PST/1:00-3:30 pm EST

  In collaboration with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and the Sitka Tribe of Alaska, U.S. EPA is hosting a three-part webinar series on the impacts of marine and freshwater harmful algal blooms (HABs) and their toxins. Registration is free.

  Attendees will have the opportunity to:

  - *Listen to and talk with Tribes from across the country about their experiences addressing the impacts of HABs and their toxins in fresh and marine waters.*
  - *Learn about strategies to build tribal capacity for effectively collecting baseline data on HABs.*
  - *Ask national experts about data collection, funding, outreach, and other HABs management needs.*

For questions or more information, please send an email to EPACyanoHABs@epa.gov

- **ORD Wildland Fire Tribal Listening Session, 2/17 2:00 PM EST**

  EPA Office of Research and Development's (ORD) Air and Energy National Research Program invites tribes to participate in the Wildland Fire Research Listening Session!

  This session will include:
  - A short overview of current ORD researchon wildland fires.
  - Listening sessions for tribes to inform ORD's update to its Wildland Fire Research plan.
  - Overview of key resources currently available to tribes (AirNow Fire and SmokeMap Pilot Project, Smoke Sense, SmokeReady Toolbox for Wildfires, WildfireSmoke Guide, etc.).

- **Drinking Water Mapping Application to Protect Source Waters (DWMAPS) Info Session, 3/11 12:00 PM EST**

  The Drinking Water Mapping Application to Protect Source Waters (DWMAPS) is an online mapping tool that provides state and utility drinking water professionals, watershed protection groups, source water protection partnerships, and others with information to update source water assessments and prioritize source water protection measures in any location or watershed in the country. During this presentation we will demonstrate the tools available in DWMAPS that, when used together with state and locally available mapping tools and data, can help users:

✓ Identify potential sources of contamination
✓ Find data to support source water assessments and plans to manage potential sources of contamination
✓ Evaluate accidental spills and releases, identifying where emergency response resources for accidental releases must be readily available
✓ Promote integration of drinking water protection activities with other environmental programs at the EPA, state, and local levels
✓ Identify source water protection partnerships and watershed projects

March Meeting

Fish Consumption Advisory Guidance Risk Communication Upcoming Consultation (Sharon Frey, OST)

Sharon Frey from OW's Office of Science and Technology will discuss a planned upcoming tribal consultation regarding EPA's online webpages for developing, implementing, and evaluating risk communication programs for fish and shellfish consumption advisories. Sharon will provide background to the development of the webpages, preview the webpages, and outline the upcoming tribal consultation.

Lead and Copper Rule Revisions Overview (Lisa Christ, OGWDW)

Lisa Christ from OW's Office of Ground Water and Drinking Water will provide a high level overview of recent changes to the Safe Drinking Water Act's Lead and Copper Rule.

Question and Answer Session Regarding New Administration, Navigable Waters Protection Rule (Rose Kwok, OWOW)

Rose Kwok from OW's Office of Wetlands, Oceans, and Watersheds will provide an update on EPA's position as it relates to the Navigable Waters Protection Rule under the new administration, and answer questions from the Council.

CWA Section 106 Tribal Guidance Revision Update (Robyn Delehanty, OWM)

This session will provide an update to the NTWC on the status of the Section 106 Tribal Guidance revision. EPA initiated consultation on the CWA Section 106 Tribal Guidance Revisions on Jan.13 and requests comment on the workgroup's recommended approach for the revision. The comment period is open through March 15th. EPA encourages the Council to provide comments on our approach.

Additional Updates, Reminders, Resources

- **OITA rescinded 2019 changes to TAS process.**
- **Thank you to NTWC for submittal of transition letter.**
- **NEJAC looking for new members. 3/24 application deadline. More info here.**
- **OW Tribal Reengagement Strategy**
- **The FY21 Exchange Network Grant Solicitation Notice has been published on Grants.gov – Applications are due on March 31st, 2021.**

  The Fiscal Year (FY) 2021 Exchange Network (EN) Grant Program Solicitation Notice (SN) has been published to Grants.gov and is available here: https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/view-opportunity.html?oppId=331293. Applications are due to EPA by 11:59 PM Eastern Time, Wednesday, March 31, 2021. Additional guidance tools, including optional fillable templates, are available for applicants both on Grants.gov and on the EN website. Applicants are encouraged to review the new FY21 SN in full, as significant updates have been made since the FY20 version. Information on applicant webinars will be provided shortly.

- **EPA announces $6 million in Annual Environmental Justice Grants**

  The EJ Small Grants and EJ Collaborative Problem Solving Grant RFAs are now live. ***Closing date is May 7, 2021.***

  Eligible entities include: non-profits, US territories, ***Tribal Governments (both federally recognized and state-recognized), and Native American Organizations***

  Small grants are for $50,000 each. CPS awards are for $160,000 each.

  Areas of emphasis include projects focusing on:

  - *COVID-19 impacts on underserved communities (both)*
  - *Climate/Disaster Resiliency (both)*
  - *Ports Initiative projects (small grants)*
  - *Projects from small non-profits of 10 or fewer employees (small grants)*
  - *New applicants and grantees (both)*

  More information is available here.

- **National Source Water Collaborative's Source Water Protection through Forestry Partnerships webpage.**

  EPA is a member of the National Source Water Collaborative and actively provides knowledge sharing opportunities, trainings, webinars, etc. on source water protection. This specific webpage is dedicated to the role that forestry partnerships play in protecting source water and brings you to a webinar series on this topic.