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Region 8 Showcase

Fort Peck Environmental Department

By Martina Wilson, Environmental Director

The Fort Peck Reservation is home to two distinct American Indian nations—the Assiniboine and Sioux. Each is composed of subordinate bands. The Canoe Paddler and Red Bottom bands comprise the Assiniboine. The Hunkpapa, Sisseton, Wahpeton and Yankton groups constitute the Sioux. Also, historically enacted Federal Homestead legislation since allowed for Non-Indian homesteading and settlement within the Fort Peck Reservation. Today, both Native American and Non-Indians reside in harmony on the Reservation. Although each has

separate governance, they regularly transact to identify, discuss and resolve common needs.

The Office of Environmental Protection (OEP) is just 1 department within the Fort Peck Tribes. OEP has grants to administer Water Quality 106, Nonpoint Source 319, Brownfields, Underground Injection Control, Pesticides, Underground Storage Tanks (UST), Leaking Underground Storage Tanks (LUST), General Assistance Program, Air Quality 105,

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Fort Peck Environmental Department

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and State and Tribal Indoor Radon Grants.

Major environmental concerns that OEP all come back to one thing: WATER! We have several projects at the Fort Peck Tribes to address our concerns with the protection and cleanliness of our water. A couple of projects OEP has done is testing groundwater in the oilfields on the reservation. Previous studies were done in conjunction with United States Geological Survey (USGS) to determine the brine contamination in groundwater in the East Poplar Unit (EPU). The results of this study helped secure funding for the Fort Peck Tribes to install water lines across the reservation with the intake being on the Missouri River. Another project in conjunction with the USGS is the study of the Flaxville Aquifer in the Lustre Oilfield. The results of this study are to be released in 2024. Another project OEP is working on is moving a roll-off site (also known as a transfer station) that was built right next to the Missouri River. At this point, the roll-off site can be seen as somewhat “falling” into the river. With Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) funding, OEP plans to clean up and move this site away from the river.

Martina Wilson-Environmental Director

Martina Wilson grew up in Poplar and Wolf Point. She graduated from Wolf Point High School in 2008, which was followed by attending Montana State University in Bozeman, MT. She graduated from Montana State with a Bachelor of Science in Animal Science in December 2012. Martina started working for the Fort Peck Tribes in January 2013 for the Fish and Game Department, later she transferred over to the Office of Environmental Protection (OEP) Department in May 2013. In April 2019, Martina Wilson became the Environmental Programs Manager of the Office of Environmental Protection for the Fort Peck Tribes. OEP has 10 different programs that Martina oversees, which includes underground injection control, water quality, brownfields, non-point source pollution, general assistance program, air quality, pesticides, underground storage tanks, and leaking underground storage tanks, and state and Tribal indoor radon grant.

Wilfred Lambert-Enforcement Programs Coordinator

Wilfred Lambert has been working in the Brownfields

program for 20 years. He also works with the underground injection program as an inspector. He will inspect wells to make sure they are in compliance with regulations. He also manages all the solid waste activities on the reservation.

Fonda Lemay-Flores-Data Quality Analyst

Fonda Lemay-Flores is the Data Quality Analyst for OEP. She does daily duties of paying bills and consolidating accounts for OEP. She also does the QA/QC for programs in OEP that have sampling. She goes out and observes sample collectors to make sure SOPs are being followed.

Jorga Christiansen-Environmental Technician I

Jorga Christiansen is the Nonpoint Source coordinator and also assists with water quality field work. She assists with the collection of data through water quality sampling, pebble counting, geomorphology, fish shocking, habitat assessments, and water flow.

Linda Weeks-Environmental Specialist

Linda Weeks is the air coordinator for OEP. She collects and changes out the filters and buckets at Fort Peck’s IMPROVE site. OEP participates in the EPA flag program, where she monitors the air with a monitor supplied by EPA to determine the health of the air for the people in Poplar.

Jeff Adams-Environmental Technician II

Jeff Adams works with our recycling program under GAP. He collects and crushes cardboard into bales that are later hauled to a recycling facility. OEP has a collection site for plastic, once plastics are separated in #1 and #2 plastic, he is able to haul it to a recycling facility.

Lawrence Flores-Environmental Technician I

Lawrence Flores works with our recycling program under GAP. He collects and crushes cardboard into bales that are later hauled to a recycling facility. OEP has a collection site for plastic, once plastics are separated in #1 and #2 plastic, he is able to haul it to a recycling facility.

Frank Red Eagle Jr.-Environmental Technician I

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Fort Peck Environmental Department

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Frank Red Eagle Jr. works with our recycling program under GAP. He collects and crushes cardboard into bales that are later hauled to a recycling facility. OEP has a collection site for plastic, once plastics are separated in #1 and #2 plastic, he is able to haul it to a recycling facility.

Ian Drum-Environmental Technician II

Ian Drum is the UST/LUST coordinator at OEP. He makes sure gas stations and other places that have USTs are in compliance with EPA regulations on the Reservation. He assists with Brownfields clean up projects as well as inspecting wells in our underground injection control program. He has the skills to do a simple swipe meth test that can determine the presence of meth.

Destiny Eder-Environmental Technician II

Destiny Eder is the pesticide coordinator for OEP. She conducts FIFRA inspections on behalf of EPA on the Fort Peck Indian Reservation and she also con-

ducts them through a Circuit Rider program with Fort Belknap Indian Community. She also does the outreach and education for OEP. Any events happening where we can get the word out about the environment, she is at.

Vacant-Environmental Scientist

If you know someone, have them apply! This position covers OEP's 106 water quality monitoring. The assist with field sampling. They do 401 and 404 permits under the Tribe's Water Quality Standards and participate in the ATTAINS trial with EPA.

Something unique about the Fort Peck Tribes-OEP is we are participating in a pilot project between EPA and FEMA. Between the two governing agencies we are updating the Tribes' Hazard Mitigation Plan and utilizing that plan to enhance Fort Peck with ecotourism projects! One being one the roll-off site in Poplar is cleaned up, the plan is to turn it into a picnic area!



Brownfields Staff Travel to Denver for Workshop

By Adrian Kulbeck, Brownfields Coordinator

On November 6-9th our Brownfields staff (Brownfields Coordinator, Environmental Compliance Officer & Environmental Technician) participated in a Tribal Response Program (TRP) workshop in Denver, CO. This event was a place to gather and share peer successes and lessons learned on brownfields redevelopment opportunities and to brainstorm strategies & creative expenditures for Bipartisan Infrastructure Law funding. Our staff also presented on how our program communicates with our council members & establishing relationships with other departments. We described our process which includes: Public meetings, monthly reports to the Fort Belknap Community Council, available Analysis of Brownfields

Cleanup Alternatives (ABCA's), as well as a brief overview of Phase II ESA reports & quarterly updates on program activities in our "Fort Belknap Environmental Protection Department's Aaniiih & Nakoda Circle Speaker newsletter". This helps not only our Council but our community in staying up to date.

This Workshop was very beneficial to our program & helps us stay informed on Brownfields information vital to our program. We got to see how Brownfields work on reservations in urban and rural settings. I found networking with fellow attendees was very beneficial.

OCTOBER 31, 2023

A Proclamation on National Native American Heritage Month, 2023

<https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/presidential-actions/2023/10/31/a-proclamation-on-national-native-american-heritage-month-2023/>

During National Native American Heritage Month, we recognize the invaluable contributions of Native peoples that have shaped our country and honor the hundreds of Tribal Nations who continue exercising their inherent sovereignty as vital members of the overlapping system of governments in the United States. We also recommit to supporting Tribal sovereignty; upholding the Federal Government's solemn trust and treaty responsibilities; and working in partnership with Tribal Nations to advance prosperity, dignity, and safety for all Native peoples.

Since time immemorial, Native communities have passed down rich cultures, knowledge, traditions, and ways of life. But throughout our history, Native peoples' cultures, identities, and governments were not always seen as a part of this Nation but as a threat to it. Native people were pressured to assimilate, banned from practicing their traditions and sacred ceremonies, and forced from their homes and ancestral homelands. This violence and devastation cost countless lives, tore families apart, and caused lasting damage to Tribal communities and institutions.

Despite centuries of violence and oppression, Native peoples remain resilient and proud. Today, Native Americans are essential to the fabric of the United States. They serve in the United States Armed Forces at higher rates than any other ethnic group. They continue to steward so many of our great lands. Their contributions to science, humanities, arts, public service, and more have brought prosperity for all of us. Their diverse cultures and communities continue to thrive and lead us forward.

Since the beginning of my Administration, I have been determined to help champion a new and better chapter in the story of our Nation-to-Nation relationships. I started by appointing Native Americans to lead in my Administration — including the first Native American Secretary of the Interior Deb Haaland, dozens of Senate-confirmed Native American officials, and over 80 Native American appointees serving across my Administration and in the Federal courts. I

restored the annual White House Tribal Nations Summit to advance communication between key members of my Administration and the leaders of hundreds of Tribal Nations. My Administration formally recognized Indigenous Knowledge as one of the many important bodies of knowledge that contributes to the scientific, technical, social, and economic advancements of the United States and our collective understanding of the natural world.

Together with leadership from Tribal Nations, we are making historic investments in Indian Country. Our American Rescue Plan invested \$32 billion in Tribal Nations — the largest one-time direct investment in Indian Country in American history. Our Bipartisan Infrastructure Law invested more than \$13 billion to rebuild infrastructure, the single largest investment in Indian Country infrastructure in history. Our Inflation Reduction Act also made the largest investment ever to combat the existential threat of climate change, including \$700 million dedicated to climate change response in Native communities. Last year, I signed a Presidential Memorandum that improves consultation between the Federal Government and Tribal Nations.

My Administration is also working to address the impacts of harmful Federal policies of the past while ensuring Native communities are safe and healthy. Through the Department of the Interior's Road to Healing initiative, Native language preservation, public safety initiatives, and bold new investments, we are supporting Native American families and their communities as they heal. We are also working to improve public health and safety for Native Americans. I signed an Executive Order that helps us respond more effectively to the epidemic of missing and murdered Indigenous peoples. Last year, when we reauthorized the Violence Against Women Act, I was proud to include historic provisions that reaffirm Tribal sovereignty and restore Tribal jurisdiction. My budget for Fiscal Year 2024 also requested a \$9.1 billion infusion for the Indian Health Service, and I have asked the Congress to make that funding a

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A Proclamation on National Native American Heritage Month, 2023

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mandatory part of the Federal budget for the first time in our history.

We are also committed to partnering with Tribal Nations to protect and steward their sacred and ancestral lands and waters. Through Tribal co-stewardship agreements, we work directly with Tribal Nations to make decisions about how to manage those lands that are most precious to them — recognizing and utilizing the invaluable knowledge they have from countless generations. I established new national monuments protecting lands sacred to Tribal Nations at Baaj Nwaavjo I'tah Kukveni in Arizona, the Camp Hale-Continental Divide in Colorado, and Avi Kwa Ame in Nevada. I also restored protections for the Northeast Canyons and Seamounts Marine National Monument in New England and Bears Ears and Grand Staircase-Escalante in Utah.

This month, we celebrate Native American history and culture. We are reminded that with hard work and a commitment to our founding ideals, we can

address the wrongs of our past and become a more perfect Union — one that ensures liberty, justice, dignity, and equality for all.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, JOSEPH R. BIDEN JR., President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and the laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim November 2023 as National Native American Heritage Month. I urge all Americans, as well as their elected representatives at the Federal, State, and local levels, to observe this month with appropriate programs, ceremonies, and activities. Also, I urge all Americans to celebrate November 24, 2023, as Native American Heritage Day.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this thirty-first day of October, in the year of our Lord two thousand twenty-three, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and forty-eighth.

JOSEPH R. BIDEN JR.



Display window at the Fort Belknap Environmental Protection Department, Celebrating National Native American Heritage Month and Honoring our Veterans—Mitchell Healy and Kermit Snow, Jr.

November 27, 2023

Montana Supreme Court Rules Department of Environmental Quality Failed to Protect Water Near Rosebud Coal Mine

Victory – Court order vacates expansion of Rosebud’s Area B mining permit

<https://earthjustice.org/press/2023/montana-supreme-court-rules-department-of-environmental-quality-failed-to-protect-water-near-rosebud-coal-mine>

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HELENA, MT — In an important victory for clean water, the Montana Supreme Court ruled on November 22, 2023, that the Montana Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) repeatedly ignored the law and failed to protect water quality from an expansion of the “Area B” permit area of the Rosebud coal strip mine near Colstrip, one of the largest coal strip mines in the nation. The court’s order vacated the mining permit, finding that Montana’s laws governing strip mining (the Montana Strip and Underground Mine Reclamation Act) prohibit DEQ from allowing strip mining if a company cannot assure that water resources will be protected.

The Western Environmental Law Center, Earthjustice, Roger Sullivan, Derf Johnson, and Walton Morris represented the Montana Environmental Information Center and Sierra Club in the case.

“All too often, the state agency that is charged with protecting water quality chooses to protect a mining company that has been polluting area waters for decades,” said **Anne Hedges, director of policy for the Montana Environmental Information Center.** “High levels of salts in water are harmful to agriculture and the environment. DEQ allowed a substantial increase in salt levels over an absurdly long length of time in a water body that is already overloaded with salts. This decision creates an opportunity to move in a new direction that protects water quality and everything that depends on clean water downstream of this mine. Now is the time to adjust course and put Montana waters first.”

The court found that DEQ and the Board of Environmental Review (BER) did not adequately consider the coal mine’s impact to water resources, including cumulative impacts from the mine and the length of

time pollution would be allowed to occur. The court also found that the BER hearings examiner improperly refused to consider evidence presented by the conservation groups.

“Montanans from across the state see decision-makers at state agencies betray their trust and best interests so huge corporations can make an easy buck,” said **Caryn Miske, chapter director of Montana Sierra Club.** “Breaking the law is bad enough, but it stings even more knowing Montana’s most precious resources are being destroyed by this negligent and blatant disregard of the facts. The court made the right decision here, but the fight to stop a rogue DEQ is far from over.”

The Rosebud strip mine is Montana’s second largest coal mine by volume. It feeds coal directly to the Colstrip coal-fired power plant. The mine is polluting adjacent waters, including the East Fork of Armells Creek, which has become so contaminated that DEQ has deemed it impaired and in violation of water quality standards.

As noted by the court, since 2006, “DEQ has designated the stream as impaired and failing to achieve water quality standards for supporting growth and propagation of aquatic life.” DEQ must consider whether the cumulative hydrologic impacts will cause material damage to area waters. DEQ ignored this duty when it approved an expansion of the Rosebud strip mine that DEQ itself found would extend the creek’s impairment for “tens to hundreds of years.” The Supreme Court remanded the matter to DEQ to consider the cumulative impacts of the permit amendment on area waters including an analysis of prolonged pollution.

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Montana Supreme Court Rules...

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“The court’s well-reasoned decision concludes that DEQ’s excuses for failing to protect Montana’s water don’t, in fact, hold water,” said **Shiloh Hernandez, an attorney with Earthjustice**, the law firm that represents plaintiffs. “DEQ now has a second chance to follow the law. We intend to hold the agency to its legal duty.”

In another blow to the Rosebud mine, on Friday, November 24, 2023, the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals dismissed an appeal by Westmoreland Rosebud Mining, LLC — operator of the mine — of another court order reversing approval of a separate mine expansion. In September 2022, a federal district court in Montana ruled that federal approval of the Area F expansion of the Rosebud Mine violated federal law by failing to lawfully disclose harmful impacts to water; impacts of massive water withdrawals from the Yellowstone River by the Colstrip Power Plant to burn coal from the mine; the impacts of tens of millions of tons of greenhouse gas emissions from coal combustion; and to consider a just transition alternative for

the community. Westmoreland attempted to appeal the district court’s decision, but the Ninth Circuit rejected the appeal as premature. The court explained that if Westmoreland has any complaints it must present them to the federal agency (the U.S. Office of Surface Mining) during the remand process.



One of the largest coal strip mines in the nation, the Rosebud mine feeds coal directly to the Colstrip coal-fired power plant.

November 9, 2023

Alaska District Court Rules Willow Oil Project Can Proceed; Conservation Groups Plan To File Appeal

Groups vow to keep up the fight against ConocoPhillips fossil fuel project in Arctic

<https://earthjustice.org/press/2023/alaska-district-court-rules-willow-oil-project-can-proceed-conservation-groups-plan-to-file-appeal>

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ANCHORAGE, AK — Environmental groups intend to challenge today’s federal court ruling that the Willow oil-drilling project in Alaska’s Western Arctic can proceed. A federal court in Alaska has sided with project developer ConocoPhillips and the federal Bureau of Land Management in a lawsuit the groups brought in March.

The lawsuit was brought by Earthjustice on behalf of Defenders of Wildlife, Friends of the Earth, and

Greenpeace USA, with the Center for Biological Diversity and Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC). The groups plan to file an appeal of the ruling to the Ninth Circuit. Environmental groups argue Interior’s approval failed to satisfy federal legal requirements. The court also ruled today on a second lawsuit, filed by Trustees for Alaska, challenging Willow on behalf of Sovereign Iñupiat for a Living Arctic and others.

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Alaska District Court Rules...

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The massive oil project would release carbon-dioxide emissions equivalent to that of driving two million extra cars for the next 30 years, while causing devastating harm to the environment, Arctic wildlife, and nearby people who depend on the land for subsistence.

Ahead of Interior's approval of Willow, ConocoPhillips, the company behind the project, claimed to investors that the initiative would become the "next great Alaska hub" that could open as much as three billion additional barrels of oil in nearby prospects that can only be accessed with Willow infrastructure in place.

Willow sparked fierce opposition from millions, including a youth climate movement and leadership from the nearby village of Nuiqsut. Opponents expressed concerns that Willow significantly and symbolically undermined U.S. national climate goals of slashing carbon emissions 50% by 2030 and achieving net zero by 2050.

Groups issued the following statements:

"While today's ruling is disappointing, we are entirely confident in our claims, and plan to appeal to the higher court," said **Erik Grafe, Deputy Managing Attorney in Earthjustice's Alaska regional office**. "Beyond the illegality of Willow's approval, Interior's decision to greenlight the project in the first place moved us in the opposite direction of our national climate goals in the face of the worsening climate crisis."

"We are extremely disappointed in today's decision, which will have tragic consequences for Arctic communities, wildlife, and our planet as a whole," said **Hallie Templeton, Legal Director at Friends of the Earth**. "But the fight is far from over. We maintain confidence in our legal claims that Interior has unlawfully ignored the significant environmental harms stemming from Willow. We won't stop until this climate disaster of a project is dead once and for all."

"Although we are disappointed in today's ruling, we will never stop fighting to protect Alaskan wildlife and landscapes from the Biden administration's wrong-headed and unlawful decision to approve the Willow project," said **Nicole Whittington-Evans, Alaska program director at Defenders of Wildlife**. "The Willow project is wholly incompatible with a clean, just ener-

gy future that protects polar bears, people, and the planet."

Tim Donaghy, Research Manager at Greenpeace USA, said: "The science is crystal clear: we cannot afford any new oil and gas projects — much less a monster project like Willow — if we want to avoid the worst impacts of global warming. Today's decision is a blow to everyone who spoke up and opposed this reckless project. The leadership of the Biden administration is now more vital than ever. We call on President Biden to stop approving these disastrous projects that will only drive us further into climate catastrophe."

"This is a really sad decision for Arctic wildlife and the climate," said **Kristen Monsell, a senior attorney at the Center for Biological Diversity**. "The Willow project poses a clear threat to people and ecosystems, but the Biden administration approved this carbon bomb without properly accounting for that potential damage. Willow will add massive fossil-fuel pollution to the atmosphere in the midst of a climate emergency and disrupt habitat for countless Arctic animals. We'll do everything in our power to keep fighting this nonsensical harmful project."

"As the public has shown in its fierce outcry against Willow, business as usual for the fossil fuel industry is untenable in the midst of a warming planet," said **Bobby McEnaney, director of the dirty energy project at NRDC (Natural Resources Defense Council)**. "Willow, which by design requires keeping the melting Arctic tundra cool just to enable drilling, symbolizes the absurdity and recklessness of expanded drilling in the Arctic. We'll continue to urge Interior to take proactive, meaningful steps to avoid fossil fuel induced climate disaster in the Arctic."



Caribou in the western Arctic.

The Federal Government Recommends Reform of Outdated Mining Laws

By Derf Johnson, MEIC

Our hardrock mining laws are broken and outdated; In particular, the laws governing extraction on federal public lands. Over the coming decades, this problem will be especially acute as the mining industry pushes to extract more metals at a lower cost, in part to feed our needed transition to a clean, carbon-free energy system. In fact, many mining corporations have pivoted their messaging to the “necessity” of mining in order to produce the “critical” minerals necessary for windmills, solar panels, and batteries. While no one can argue that clean energy facilities need metals, the mining industry arguments give short shrift to the parallel necessity of protecting clean water, clean air, and public health during the climate crisis, when these essential ingredients for life and prosperity become all the more critical.

Recognizing the inevitable changes that our nation and the world now face, Pres. Joe Biden directed the U.S. Department of Interior to conduct a comprehensive review of our nation's mining laws and regulations. Over the past several months, the interagency working group convened experts, stakeholders, and the public to review our outdated laws and make recommendations for reform. The extensive set of recommendations was released in a report in September, and includes both regulatory and policy changes that agencies (i.e. Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management, etc) could enact almost immediately,

as well as more sweeping reforms that will require congressional approval.

Most notably, the report recommends that Congress scrap the 1872 mining law – the antiquated law that governs mineral extraction on federal public lands – and convert to a leasing system with royalty payments to the public. The 1872 mining law was passed during the presidency of Ulysses S. Grant, aimed at “settling” the west and regulating miners with pick-axes and mules but has long since proven to be inadequate in protecting the environment and people from modern mining. Unfortunately, its 151-year duration implicitly signals the difficulty in reforming this law, and the likelihood of Congress passing legislation for Pres. Biden to sign is slim to nil.

However, the report also provides an extensive set of recommendations for federal agencies to implement that do not require Congressional approval, such as increasing public and Tribal engagement; making permitting processes more consistent and predictable; protecting impacted communities and workers; and safeguarding environmentally and culturally sensitive lands. Time will ultimately tell whether and how federal agencies will implement such reforms, but the report offers a relatively straightforward set of goals that agencies can and should work to implement over the next few years.

Montana woman named a CNN Hero

By Orlinda Worthington

Yellowstone Public Radio | Published November 27, 2023 at 7:00 AM MST

<https://www.ypradio.org/regional-news/2023-11-27/montana-woman-named-a-cnn-hero>



A Montana woman, and member of the Gros Ventre Tribe, is one of CNN's Top Ten Heroes for 2023.

Yellowstone Public Radio's Orlinda Worthington shares her story.

Tescha Hawley lives

near Harlem, just north of the Fort Belknap Reservation where she grew up. It's a remote part of north-east Montana, 40 miles south of the Canadian border. Her journey to helping others began during a difficult time for her personally.

“Back in 2017, I was diagnosed with breast cancer. I quickly realized that our worlds don't communicate in the same way when it comes to healthcare,” Hawley said.

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Montana woman named a CNN Hero

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The lifesaving treatment she needed several times a month was 200 miles away.

“Transportation in our community is a huge barrier.”

After her recovery, she started the Day Eagle Hope Foundation to help alleviate barriers for others.

“There was a missing link in the services between our reservation and between our community and the major hospitals in the state of Montana and I decided to really look at patient navigation and to connect these two worlds together so we could better understand each other,” Hawley said.

Hawley began the foundation with her own money during Covid 19. She now writes grants for her foundation, and has expanded services outside of healthcare.

“I received 250-thousand dollars over the next 2 years to deliver non processed, traditional, organic food, from our farmers and ranchers locally. That’s

both Indian and non indian farmers and ranchers.”

When Hawley first learned she’d been named a CNN Top Ten Hero, she tried to keep it quiet.

“I just wanted to traditionally, humbly go about my business, do the work that needs to be done. And it wasn't until they explained to me that this could expose our work to other funders, donors, which will in turn help my community. So. You know, when I win, my whole community wins.”

All the Top Ten Heroes will be honored live on CNN on December 10th.



Young Tribal Leaders Art Contest

<https://www.bia.gov/service/art-contest>

The Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) Division of Environmental Services and Cultural Resources Management (DESCRM) is hosting a Young Tribal Leaders Art Contest to further highlight the perspectives and creativity of Native youth and young professionals across the nation within themes of culture, environment, and climate. See below for eligibility guidelines and additional information. Submissions are due by Saturday January 6, 2024, and winners will be announced in February 2024. Winning submissions will be featured in Washington, D.C. as well as on the DESCRM website. Additionally, awardees will receive travel funding to attend the 2024 National Tribal and Indigenous Climate Conference to share their work.

Background

DESCRM includes the Branch of Cultural Resources Management, the Branch of Environmental Services, and the Branch of Tribal Climate Resilience. Our mis-

sion is to work with Tribes to protect, develop, manage and enhance American Indian and Alaska Native environmental, cultural and historical resources.

Eligibility

Submissions are open to citizens of federally-recognized Tribes and Alaska Native Villages who are 14-30 years old as of January 1, 2024. A list of federally-recognized Tribes can be found in the August 11, 2023 edition of the Federal Register.

Artwork Submissions

Artwork submissions should center themes of culture, environment, and climate. Submissions must be original creations and they may be two-dimensional or three-dimensional.

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Young Tribal Leaders Art Contest

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Submissions may include, but are not limited to, photography, digital art, drawings and paintings, basketry, pottery, beadwork, and quillwork. Photographs that include identifiable individuals must include a signed photo release for each individual.

There is no limit to the number of submissions per participant. However, you may receive a monetary prize for only one. Additional work selected will still be featured. Collaborative submissions are permitted. The prize for a collaborative submission will be granted to the individual who submits the artwork.

Submissions may not include nudity, paraphernalia, or explicit material. We encourage you to consider viewers with visual impairment by submitting artwork that uses high color contrast and distinctive shapes.

How to Enter

To enter, please take a photograph or scan of your artwork. Photos of three-dimensional submissions should have a neutral background, be well-lit, and clearly showcase your art. For more help with photographing your art, the National Archive offers a Digital Photography Guide. Email scans and digital photos of your artwork to Youth.Art.Contest@bia.gov.

If you can't send a photograph of your artwork, you may also mail your submission to be digitally photographed by the contest organizers. Mail physical submissions to the following address:

**BIA Museum Program, ATTN: Justin Giles
1849 C Street NW - Mail Stop 4620
Washington, DC 20240**

If you would like your artwork returned, please include a return mailing address with your submission.

With each submission, please include:

- A signed Indian Affairs Photo Release Form, including:
 - Your name (first and last),
 - Tribal affiliation(s),
 - Mailing address,
- Contact information, such as phone number or email address,

- The title of your submission and a brief description of your artwork (1-3 sentences).

All submissions must be received by the end of the day Saturday January 6, 2024.

Example Gallery



From left to right: Mixed media by Genevieve Muldoon, "The Seven R's" by Lara A. Jacobs (Muscogee Creek), Coral B. Avery (Shawnee Tribe), Rhode Salonen (Muscogee Creek) and Kathryn D. Champagne (Muscogee Creek), digital photograph by Jenni Jose.

Young Tribal Leaders Art Contest

Submit by January 6, 2024

BIA Division of Environmental Services and Cultural Resource Management



Culture - Environment - Climate

Winning submissions will be featured in a gallery online and in Washington, D.C. Awardees will also receive travel funding to share their work at the 2024 National Tribal and Indigenous Climate Conference.

Eligibility: Tribal citizens ages 14-30

Learn more: <https://www.bia.gov/service/art-contest>



Submit your work:

Youth.Art.Contest@bia.gov
BIA Museum Program, ATTN: Justin Giles
1849 C Street NW - Mail Stop 4620
Washington, DC 20240

June 2020

Montana PFAS Action Plan

<https://deq.mt.gov/cleanupandrec/Programs/pfas>



PFAS in Montana

Montana developed this PFAS Action Plan to guide the steps the state is taking to protect Montana citizens and resources from the potential risks posed by a family of chemicals known as **per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS)**, including two common PFAS, **perfluorooctane sulfonate (PFOS)** and **perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA)**. This action plan is a living document that will be updated as we get more information and as science progresses.

This PFAS Action Plan was crafted with input from multiple agencies and stakeholders through a PFAS Working Group. Creating shared PFAS objectives produces a consistent, collaborative approach to addressing PFAS in Montana.

Why should we be concerned about PFAS?

Everyone is exposed to PFAS. Some PFAS pose a health risk and are known to have toxic effects. PFAS are present in many different commercial products, such as non-stick coatings, stain- and water-resistant products, protective coatings, personal healthcare products, firefighting foams, and architectural resins (ITRC 2018). Certain PFAS, including PFOS and PFOA, are mobile, persistent, and bioaccumulative, and are not known to degrade in the environment (ITRC 2020).

Major Sources of PFAS: Aqueous film forming foam, production and manufacturing facilities, landfills, and wastewater treatment plants, including biosolids application sites.

PFAS Action Plan Objectives

Our goal is to reduce or eliminate potential risks posed by PFAS to human health and the environment.

Objective 1: Identify & inventory known and potential PFAS sources/sites

This objective will be achieved through the following actions:

- Conduct surveys of potential sources (inventory storage, use, and disposal of PFAS).
- Identify existing areas (known sources) of PFAS contamination.
- Identify routes of human and ecological exposure.
- Develop a priority ranking system to rank known and potential sites.
- Develop PFAS geographic information system (GIS) base map (risk map) identifying known and potential PFAS sites (emphasis on proximity to private water supply wells and public water supply (PWS) sources).
- Develop a multi-faceted monitoring program, including standard operating procedures (SOPs) for sampling different media, to better identify PFAS impacts across the State.

Objective 2: Provide public outreach and education

This objective will be achieved through the following actions:

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Montana PFAS Action Plan

(Continued from page 12)

- Develop a risk communication plan that uses plain language and timely communication, including for sampling and remediation events.
- Continue to stay informed on advancements in scientific knowledge and regulatory developments at the federal/national level.
- Foster community outreach through development and distribution of educational materials (website, media, brochures, blogs).
- Establish guidelines for coordinating with public health agencies.
- Be responsive to public feedback about educational needs (and adapt strategy as we go).
- Educate public about PFAS-free products and encourage their use.

Objective 3: Protect drinking water sources & ecology

This objective will be achieved through the following actions:

- Sample public/private water systems (monitoring); if concentrations exceed EPA's lifetime drinking water health advisory of 70 nanograms/liter ((ng/L) or parts per trillion (ppt)) for PFOS and PFOA, individually or combined, recommend alternatives, including other sources of water and water treatment.
- Identify need to sample private wells near confirmed and potential sources and determine if funding is available or needs to be secured.
- Sample fish near sources and where source exposure is not as likely.
- Develop fish consumption advisories.
- Consider PFAS in Source Water Protection Plans.
- Compile data in DEQ-wide or state-wide database with sharing and mapping capabilities.
- Pursue preventive measures (legislation, regulation, permitting).
- Clean up identified sources to protect public health and the environment. Develop guidelines and best management practices (BMPs) for private well sampling.

Objective 4: Identify resources/funding & determine legislative restrictions/potential

This objective will be achieved through the following actions:

- Identify grant funding availability (EPA, state, private, etc.) and EPA Unregulated Contaminant Monitoring Rule (UCMR) funding (with focus on public and private water well sampling).
- Educate agency directors/governor on needs and State risks for potential legislature involvement.
- Build relationships with non-government organizations (NGOs), legislators, county health agents, etc.
- Leverage agency resources: combine resources from DEQ, FWP, DPHHS, MDA, counties, etc. to address action items.
- Evaluate the need for (and role of) regulations to reduce future PFAS loading to the environment.

Objective 5: Identify disposal options and reduce use of products that contain PFAS

This objective will be achieved through the following actions:

- Coordinate with other agencies and private businesses to determine best management practices for disposal of contaminated media and consumer products containing PFAS.
- Identify and promote the use of PFAS-free alternatives/products.
- Prevent creation of new sites (such as biosolid application sites) through better sampling and planning.

Contact Information:

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Cleanup Protection and Redevelopment

Section Supervisor

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For more information on PFAS in Montana and updates on this PFAS Action Plan, visit our website at: deq.mt.gov/DEQAdmin/PFAS.





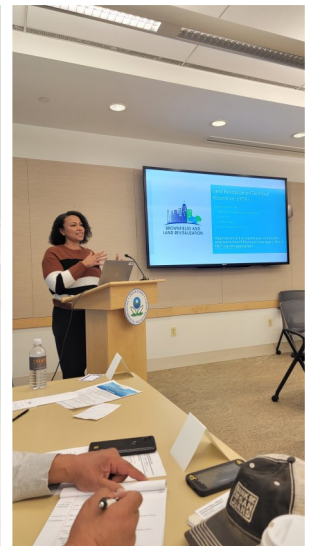
Brownfields ECO Be Trippin'

By Kermit Snow Jr, BTRP Compliance Officer

Wahey Neetine, hello my relatives. The first Quarter of the new Fiscal Year is almost in the books. I know everybody is full of turkey and Christmas is right around the corner to keep your belly & spirits high, lol. The high school football, volleyball, and cross country season is over and we're all looking forward to boys & girls basketball and boys & girls wrestling seasons to get underway. Best of Luck to all the athletes of the area schools: Harlem WildCats & LadyCats, Hays-

Lodge Pole Thunderbirds & Lady Thunderbirds, and the Dodson Coyotes & Lady Coyotes. Sadly, after 21 years of broadcasting on KGVA 88.1 FM for these great schools, I will be hanging it up this year. It has been a great run and I wish them all the best. It's been a slow, but good start to the year, with lots of tasks to be accomplished. One of the first things on my list, was to make sure I got my 8-Hour HazWoper Refresher updated. I can always thank ITEP for their help here, as I use their resources to complete my certification. I use to take their course at TLEF, but they have created an online course now, that makes it a lot easier since they stopped having the course in person and it helps those who cannot travel for the course or conference. One thing I keep up with on a monthly basis, are my inspections of Transfer Sites in the three communities and the UST Monthly Walkthrough Inspection at the Little River Trading Post. There has been a shake up within the transition team overseeing the project renovation of the Little River Trading Post. I thought this would put a big dent in what we have done so far, but I was relieved to hear that my good friend Eddie Moore was still on board and would take over the project. We have come a long ways and are hoping to install new UST's

in the spring. The community is also asking about wanting a canopy over the existing dispensers, to shield them from the elements. I assured them that once we get our new tanks in the ground, the new canopy will also go up. They did get the new sign up this past week and it looks great, one step at a time. They are getting great assistance from the Oneida Tribe's group OES and Victoria Flowers. I can't wait for spring.



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Brownfields ECO Be Trippin'

(Continued from page 14)

On the flip side of that, I got to take part in another Joint EPA Region 7 & 8 Brownfields Workshop, this time in Denver, CO. I remember the last time we had a joint meeting with Region 7, it was in Omaha, NE in 2019. You can find out interesting news at a meeting like this sometimes, like our Tribe was awarded another Brownfields Grant, which was news to me. My Project Officer asked me who the entity was and I told him and I also told him I didn't know about their application. We did end up helping each other out, which is always good when people



and Programs work together. I was corralled to speak at the workshop, once they knew I was coming for sure. I helped welcome all the participants to this joint meeting, with help from Greg Davis (Region 8). I then talked about my time with the Environmental Department (23 Years and counting), starting with Air Quality Coordinator, with stops as Env. Liaison for Council, Indoor Air Quality Coordinator, Brownfields Env. Tech, and now the Brownfields Environmental Compliance Officer. I talked about some of the Projects we got lined up and working with other Tribes on anything we may need. I talked about networking and asking for help from Tribes that may have something you need or are dealing with same issues as you. I told them this type of meeting is where networking starts, introduce yourselves, ask questions, like they say, don't try and reinvent the wheel, somebody has what you need. That was one of the first things I learned from ITEP, back in early 2001. It has been a great learning experience so far, as I keep learning every day and keep moving forward. You have to be open to learning every day, everything is always changing, be open to new things. I then introduced my Boss Adrian Kulbeck and he gave a talk on the Program and what he does. He has come a long way since getting hired in December 2022 and has the Program

moving in a positive path. Some of the things they talked about was the BIL Funding, challenges we face, sharing positive culture, leaving this meeting with new & innovative ideas, and building strong relationships with new partners. We talked about Tribal Response Programs and the Four Elements, Outreach from Region 7 (Paige Hingst) perspective. I found out at last minute they had me on the agenda, AGAIN, lol. Myself and Greg

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Brownfields ECO Be Trippin'

(Continued from page 15)

Davis, talked about Departmental Communication and how we go about that, especially with our Tribal Councils. Another important topic we discussed was on Succession Planning and importance of SOP's by Melissa Devincenzi (Region 8) and Dani Zephier (Yankton). The great thing about these topic discussions, was breaking into four groups to discuss and then report out to the other groups on how we dealt with each topic. The first day ended with a group discussion and recap of the days events. We did have a group dinner and get together that first night, a great way to network, blow off some steam, and have fun with new friends. On the second day, we got to take a look at how the new KSU-TAB website was working out and how they are dealing with some glitches. The day was filled with Panel discussions from Brownfields Tools & Resources, Procurement and Other Grant Requirements, IDC, BIL Funding Opportunities, How to Tackle Abandoned Properties & Open Dumps, HUD, and EPA Brownfields Job Training Grants. We ended the meeting with breakout sessions with our Project Officers. I barely returned home and was back at the airport the following week for my next meeting, in Albuquerque, NM. I took part in the Joint EPA Region 6 & 8 Regional Tribal Operations Committee (RTOC) meeting. This is the first with Region 6, as we have had meetings with Region's 7 & 10 in the past. The day started with a welcome from Jason Walker (Region 8 Chair) and Tabitha Langston (Region 6 Chair). I was then asked by Jason Walker to open the meeting with a Prayer. We then went into our Tribal Caucus, no EPA personnel. We had an open discussion talking about the McGirt decision and how it affects the Oklahoma Tribes and could affect other Tribes in the Nation in the future. We talked about Region 8 wanting to start a Consortia, similar to ITEC (Region 6) and Region 10. One of the things we would possibly get out of this, is a tire shredder for all Region 8 Tribes to share. We talked about sharing information such as workplans, QAPP's, and other documents/information between Tribes to help them out if they are looking for help. We talked about WOTUS, a blanket TAS, Codes: Jurisdiction & Enforcement, ETEP's, and GAP Dollars for ETEP's. The afternoon session started with talk on Funding and TCTACS (Thriving Communities Technical



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Brownfields ECO Be Trippin'

(Continued from page 16)

Assistance Centers). We then listened to Merhdad Khatibi (ITEP) give an overview of their organization and how they can help Tribes, resources they provide, the different conferences they put on, and that there was still settlement money in the Volkswagon settlement case for Tribes. We listened to what the National Tribal Caucus representatives had to report out, followed by the Tribal Program Managers report out. Day two started with opening remarks by Jason & Tabitha and then we had the Flag & Veteran's song by Tom Teegarden, which was



followed by the Invocation and Opening remarks by Lt. Governor Eugene Jiron (Pueblo of Isleta). We then heard Opening remarks from Rafael DeLeon (EPA HQ), Jason Walker & Tabitha Langston. We then followed that with an open discussion for all. We then went into TCTACS and CWA Section 106. We then listened to Lisa Berrios (AIEO) and Michelle Mukeli (EPN) talk about the Environmental Protection Network (EPN) and how it was founded by former EPA people and that they provide technical assistance (Class I Airsheds, QAPPs, etc), build capacity, and can provide feedback on Grants. Lisa followed that with talk on ETEPs, combining ETEPs & work-plans, ETEP used in Strategic Plan. GAP & ETEP with a new template (not sure when it will rollout). We heard about Tribal Waste Management from Caroline Klos (OLEM) on issues such as residential solid waste, operations, maintenance, and identifying gaps in funding. Colleen Adams (Region 8) then talked about Region 8 Tribal Infrastructure Task Force and funding opportunities, Grants, and the TCTACS webinar on Dec. 14, 2023. We ended the meeting with closing remarks from Tabitha and information on the next day field trips. On the last day of meeting, I attended the Jackpile Mine and Sky City field trip. It was good

to see what the Jackpile Mine looked like and how it affected their Tribe. It looked similar to the Zortman/Landusky Mine, but way bigger. The visit to Sky City was awesome. It was great to see the historic site, dating back before the 1600's, the church & cemetery, and the houses. All in all, this was a great meeting between the two regions, and meeting new friends, and the collaboration between all Tribes & EPA. One of the best things was getting to see my good friend Stephen Hartsfield, who lives in Albuquerque, always great to see old friends from the past. Well, until next time, A'HO.

**Fort Belknap Indian Community Environmental Protection Department
Brownfields/Tribal Response Program**

2023 PUBLIC RECORD

SITE NAME →	Old Agency Landfill	Old Agency Dump	Lodge Pole Community Hall	Peoples Creek Dipping Vat
Type of Site	Abandoned Landfill	Abandoned Landfill	Abandoned Historic Building	Former Cattle Dipping Vat
What Type of Response Action was Taken?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aug 2002—Phase I ESA Final Report • Dec 2003—Phase II ESA Final Report • Sept 2006—Phase III Final Report (included further sampling activities) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sept 2003—Phase I ESA Final Report • Targeted Brownfields Assessment (TBA) • March 2004—Phase II ESA Final Report • April 2019—FBIC Brownfields received a State of Montana DNRC Planning grant to be utilized in conducting further assessment of contamination of the Old Agency Dump. • 2nd Phase II ESA Scheduled for Summer/Fall 2020 postponed due to COVID-19 concerns. • April/May 2021—2nd Phase II ESA conducted. • September 2021—2nd Phase II ESA completed. • November 2021—Phase II Report of Findings Completed. • November 2021 Analysis of Brownfields Cleanup Alternatives for Old Agency dump was completed. • August 2022—Cleanup Grant secured. • June 2023- Fort Belknap Indian Community USEPA Brownfields Cleanup Project Work Plan Submitted & approved. • October 2023-Fort Belknap QAPP was signed & approved. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jan 2007—Final Report Phase I ESA (Lead and Asbestos survey included) • Dec 2007—Final Phase II ESA Report • April 2008—Phase III Report completed • Oct 2008—Cleanup Process implemented • Dec 2010—Cleanup activities & post sampling completed • April 2011—Final Report 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sept 2010—Final Report-Phase I ESA complete. • Mar 3, 2010—EPA Site Eligibility form complete and approved. • June 2011—QAPP/ Field Sampling Plan completed. • Aug 16, 2011—Phase II ESA field sampling event completed. • Jan 2012-TBA—Phase II ESA Final Report. • June 2015—Programmatic Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP), Sampling and Analysis Plan (SAP), and Correctible Action Plan (CAP) completed & approved. • Oct 12, 2015—Cleanup of arsenic contaminated soils and confirmation sampling. • Dec 29, 2015—Cleanup Verification Report.



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Brownfields/Tribal Response Program Public Record

(Continued from page 12)

SITE NAME →	Old Agency Landfill	Old Agency Dump	Lodge Pole Community Hall	Peoples Creek Dipping Vat
Date Action is Planned	No Action Planned at this time.	2023-2025	Renovation for community hall	Oct 2015—Cleanup of soils and confirmation sampling completed.
Name of Owner at Time of Clean-up	Fort Belknap Indian Community	Fort Belknap Indian Community	Fort Belknap Indian Community	Fort Belknap Indian Community
Owner Address, City, State, Zip	Fort Belknap Agency 656 Agency Main St. Harlem, MT 59526	Fort Belknap Agency 656 Agency Main St. Harlem, MT 59526	Fort Belknap Agency 656 Agency Main St. Harlem, MT 59526	Fort Belknap Agency 656 Agency Main St. Harlem, MT 59526
Latitude/Longitude	N48.48283° W108.77411°	N48.47454° W108.78374°	N48.20606° W108.319750°	N48.155270° W108.302386°
Legal Description	T32N, R23E, SEC32	T31N, R23E, SEC6	T26N, R25E, SEC8	T29N, R25E, SEC 20
Are Institutional Controls (IC) Needed at Site?	Yes	Yes	Yes-Lead Based Paint Dust exceed cleanup levels	Yes
Are ICs in Place?	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Type of Institutional Control (IC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aug 2008-Signage posted • Sept 2009-Tribal Resolution-notification requiring further sampling or soil removal before future use of site 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aug 2008-Signage posted • Sept 2009-Tribal Resolution-notification requiring further sampling or soil removal before future use of site 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building locked and signage posted describing environmental concerns. • Final Report provided to Transportation/ Planning. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nov 2015–Fencing completed and Signage placed at site.
Summarize Nature of Contamination at Site	DDD, DDE, DDT, - Specific areas of landfill. Sampling in 2006 confirmed site does not warrant cleanup.	DDE, DDT, DEHP, PCB'S	Lead Based Paint dust remains. Asbestos-abated, DPH, EPH (diesel derivatives)-cleaned up.	Arsenic in soils
Site Size in Acres	5 acres	10 acres	<5	<2 acres

SITE NAME →	Snake Butte Rock Quarry	Old Lodge Pole Elementary School	Old Sacred Heart Church	Old Agency Water Treatment Plant
Type of Site	Rock Quarry Site	Abandoned School	Abandoned Historic Building	Abandoned Water Treatment Facility
What Type of Response Action was Taken?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • August 2002—Phase I ESA conducted • Dec 2003—Phase II ESA Report (Brownfields Assessment Project) • June 28, 2016—START Contractor conducted Phase II ESA Sampling. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • July 2019 TBA submitted to EPA Region 8 to conduct ESA. • December 10-14, 2019, Weston Solutions, Inc., EPA Contractors, conduct Phase II ESA. • March 2020—Phase II ESA Completed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • July 2019 TBA submitted to EPA Region 8 to conduct ESA. • December 10-14, 2019, Weston Solutions, Inc., EPA Contractors, conduct Phase II ESA. • March 2020—Phase II ESA Completed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • July 2019 TBA submitted to EPA Region 8 to conduct ESA. • December 10-14, 2019, Weston Solutions, Inc., EPA Contractors, conduct Phase II ESA. • March 2020—Phase II ESA Completed.

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Brownfields/Tribal Response Program Public Record

(Continued from page 13)


SITE NAME →	Snake Butte Rock Quarry	Old Lodge Pole Elementary School	Old Sacred Heart Church	Old Agency Water Treatment Plant
What Type of Response Action was Taken?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • August 22, 2016—received Draft Phase II ESA – Snake Butte Quarry report for review/comment. • August 30, 2016—copy provided to Brownfields Environmental Technician & Environmental Compliance Officer. • No additional assessment is recommended. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • November 2021 Analysis of Brownfields Cleanup Alternatives for Old LP elementary school was completed. • August 2022—Cleanup Grant secured. • June 2023- Fort Belknap Indian Community USEPA Brownfields Cleanup Project Work Plan Submitted & Approved. • October 2023-Fort Belknap QAPP was signed & approved. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • November 2021 Analysis of Brownfields Cleanup Alternatives for Sacred Heart Church was completed. • August 2022—Cleanup Grant secured. • June 2023- Fort Belknap Indian Community USEPA Brownfields Cleanup Project Work Plan Submitted & Approved. • October 2023-Fort Belknap QAPP was signed & approved. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • November 2021 Analysis of Brownfields Cleanup Alternatives(ABCA) for Old Agency Water Treatment plant was completed. • August 2022—Cleanup Grant secured. • June 2023- Fort Belknap Indian Community USEPA Brownfields Cleanup Project Work plan was Submitted & Approved. • August 2023- Water Treatment site inspection was done. • October 2023-Fort Belknap QAPP was signed & approved.
Date Action is Planned	Spring 2017—Signage & fencing at site.	2023-2025	2023-2025	2023-2025
Name of Owner at Time of Clean-up	Fort Belknap Indian Community	Fort Belknap Indian Community	Fort Belknap Indian Community	Fort Belknap Indian Community
Owner Address, City, State, Zip	Fort Belknap Agency 656 Agency Main St. Harlem, MT 59526	Fort Belknap Agency 656 Agency Main St. Harlem, MT 59526	Fort Belknap Agency 656 Agency Main St. Harlem, MT 59526	Fort Belknap Agency 656 Agency Main St. Harlem, MT 59526
Latitude/Longitude	N48.23445° W108.50179°	N 48.48428° W108.7722°	N48.4488° W108.65863°	N48.48428° W108.7722°
Legal Description	T31N, R22E, SEC 35	T26N, R25E, Sec 5	T31N, R24E, Sec 18	T32N, R23E, Sec 32
Are Institutional Controls (IC) Needed at Site?	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Are ICs in Place?	No	Yes	Yes	No
Type of Institutional Control (IC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Signage- Spring #1 (Alternate DW) & Springs #2 & #3 (Toluene Presence). • Fencing-Spring #1 (Spring Box); Springs #2 & #3 (Perimeter); and 2-Tunnels (Remove Access). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building is locked up. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building boarded up. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building is not locked up/secured. • August 2023-Building was locked up & secured

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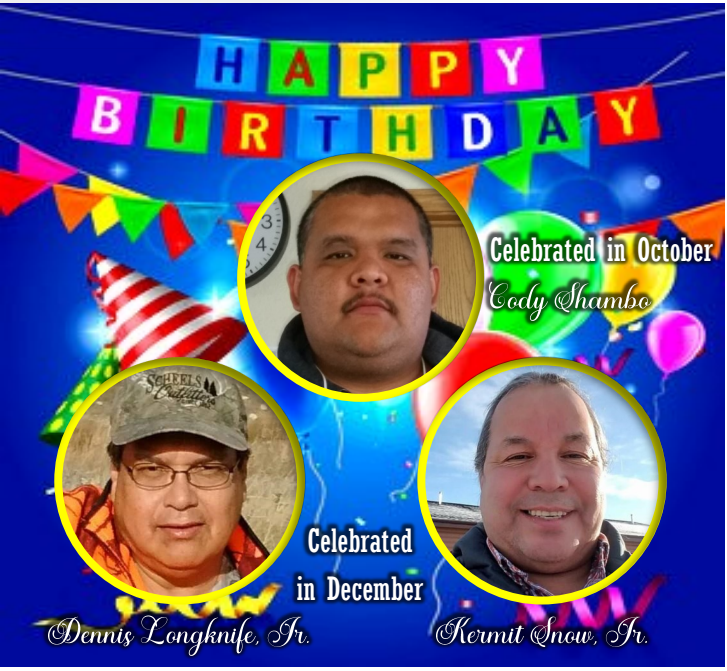
SITE NAME →	Snake Butte Rock Quarry	Old Lodge Pole Elementary School	Old Sacred Heart Church	Old Agency Water Treatment Plant
Summarize Nature of Contamination at Site	Springs #2 & #3 indicate low levels of toluene, but due to no human contact, pathway is incomplete. Spring #1 indicates no exceedances above EPA Regional Screening Level (RSL). No contamination of surface soils or waste rock soil piles.	Lodge Pole Elementary School was built in 1957. ACM - Shop, Residence, North Addition, School Old Section Exterior, School Old Section Interior, School New Section. LBP - Shop Interior, Shop Exterior, School Residence Interior, School Residence Exterior, School Old Section. Lead in Soils – Around Shop and Residences. PCB-Containing Ballasts – School Old Section, School New Section. Mercury Thermostat Switches – Maintenance Garage and School Old Section. Mold – School Old Section. Guano – School Old Section. Petroleum Hydrocarbons & Unknown Chemicals – Several containers in Maintenance Garage.	Sacred Heart Catholic Church was built in 1931. ACM in Boiler Jacket in Basement. LBP on exterior door frame, door jam, window frame. Guano	Agency Water Treatment Plant was built in 1973. ACM in Dry Wall Compound, in ceiling, walls throughout building, seam tape in north addition. PCB-Containing Ballasts Guano > 1 foot in interior throughout building. Petroleum Hydrocarbons & Unknown Chemicals 3-drum diallyl dimethylammonium chloride; 1-drum corrosive liquid coagulant; 1-drum unknown contents, labeled “mixup”; and 1-drum overpacked (inside and outside facility).
Site Size in Acres	<800 acres	8.750 acres	10 acres	314.390 acres



Circle Speaker
Aaniih & Nakoda Environmental Newsletter
VOLUME 28; ISSUE 2
Deadline for Articles is
Friday, March 1st, 2023 @ 5:00 p.m.
 Articles can be emailed to: lonettebc@ftbelknap.org



To allow time for editing and layout of the newsletter, articles must be submitted on time in order to be considered for publication. Articles received after this deadline will be considered for the following issue. All articles submitted are subject to review and approval.



HAPPY BIRTHDAY

Celebrated in October
Cody Shambo

Celebrated in December
Dennis Longknife, Jr.

Celebrated in December
Kermit Snow, Jr.

2023-2025 Fort Belknap Indian Community Council



An Inauguration ceremony was held on November 8th to seat *8 new council members.

Back Row (L-R): *Blake Stiffarm (Gros Ventre Rep.), *Randall "Butch" Werk, Sr. (Mountain Gros Ventre District Rep.), *John A. Allen (Assiniboine Rep.), *George Jay Ball (Assiniboine At Large Rep.), *Stephen "Shelly" Fox (Gros Ventre At Large Rep.)
 Front Row (L-R): *Randi R. Wing-Fetter (Mountain Assiniboine District Rep.), *Cecelia "Boppers" Shortman (River Gros Ventre District Rep.), Judy King (Vice President), *Donald "Duck" Horn (River Assiniboine District Rep.), Jeffrey Stiffarm (President).

FBICC Committees and Committee Assignments

The Following is the designated Committee Chairperson and Vice Chairperson assignment, with oversight responsibilities over the respective areas.

Executive Committee

Chair – Judy King

Vice Chair – Jeff Stiffarm

1. Central Administration
2. District Offices
3. Human Resources/Personnel
4. Enrollment
5. Maintenance
6. Recording
7. Public Relations

*Enterprises

1. Island Mountain Development Group (IMDG)
2. Intertribal Monitoring Association on Indian Trust Funds (ITMA)
3. Prairie Mountain Utilities (PMU)

4. Tribal Construction
5. Fort Belknap Casino
6. Housing Authority
7. Fort Belknap Insurance

Natural Resources

Chair – John Allen

Vice Chair – Blake Stiffarm

1. Tribal Historic Preservation Office (THPO)
2. Environmental Protection Department (EPD)
3. Fire Management
4. MSU Extension
5. Volunteer Fire Department
6. Language Preservation
7. Climate Change
8. Irrigation
9. Water Resources

10. Hemp Program

Land Committee

Chair – Blake Stiffarm

Vice Chairman – Stephen Fox, Jr.

1. Land

Finance Committee

Chair – Judy King

Vice Chair – Jeff Stiffarm

1. Finance
2. Procurement/Property & Supply
3. Economic Development (Credit)
4. Investment Board

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FBICC Committees and Committee Assignments

(Continued from page 22)

Planning Committee

Chair – Stephen Fox, Jr.

Vice Chair – Randi Wing-Fetter

1. Planning
2. 477 Employment & Training
3. Tiwahe Initiative

Public Safety

Chair – Randall Werk, Sr.

Vice Chair – Donald Horn

1. Law Enforcement Services (LES)-Police
2. Fish & Game
3. Buffalo Program
4. Roads Maintenance
5. Transportation
6. Emergency Management Performance Grant (EMPG)/Disaster Emergency Services (DES)
7. Office of the Prosecutors
8. Criminal Investigation

General Services

Chair – Donald Horn

Vice Chair – Randi Wing-Fetter

1. Informational Technology (I.T.)
2. Tribal Employment Rights Office (TERO)
3. Courts
4. North Central Montana Upward Bound
5. Headstart/Early Headstart
6. Child Care Program



Human Services

Chair – Cecelia Shortman

Vice Chair – Randall Werk, Sr.

1. Senior Citizens Centers
2. Commodity/Food Distribution Program
3. Child Support Services
4. Vocational Rehabilitation
5. Social Services

Veterans - AD HOC

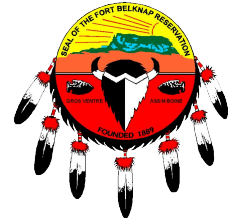
Co-Chair – Stephen Fox, Jr.

Health

Chair – George Jay Ball

Vice Chair – John Allen

1. Health Programs: Behavioral Health, Chemical Dependency Center (CDC), Community Health Representatives (CHR), Com. Based Prev Block Grant, Centralized Billing, Diabetes Coord., Diabetes Prev., Emergency Prep, Environmental Health, Family Planning/Domestic Violence, Medicaid Transp., Medicaid Eligibility, Micro Grant, Elderly Medical Transportation, Native Connections, Nutrition, Partnership for Success, Personal Care Assistants (PCA), Public Health Nursing (PHN), Public Health Emerg. Prep., Safe on All Roads (SOAR), Sanitation, Security, Tobacco Prevention, Tribal Health Admin., Tribal Health Improvement Program (THIP), Woman Infants Children (WIC), Zero Suicide.



Recycling in the United States

<https://www.epa.gov/recycle/recycling-united-states>

Article continued from Circle Speaker Volume 27 : Issue 4, Page 11

Recycling is the process of collecting and processing materials that would otherwise be thrown away as trash and turning them into new products. Recycling can benefit your community, the economy, and the environment. Products should only be recycled if they cannot be reduced or reused. EPA promotes the waste management hierarchy, which ranks various waste management strategies from most to least environmentally preferred. The hierarchy prioritizes source reduction and the reuse of waste materials over recycling.

U.S. Recycling System Overview

The recycling process is made up of three steps that are repeated over and over again. This creates a continuous loop which is represented by the familiar chasing arrows recycling symbol. The three steps of

the recycling process are described below.

Step 1: Collection and Processing

Businesses and consumers generate recyclables that

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Recycling in the United States

(Continued from page 23)

are then collected by either a private hauler or government entity. There are several methods for collecting recyclables, including curbside collection, drop-off centers, and deposit or refund programs. Visit *How do I recycle...* Common Recyclables for information on specific materials.

After collection, recyclables are sent to a recovery facility to be sorted, cleaned, and processed into materials that can be used in manufacturing. Recyclables are bought and sold just like raw materials would be, and prices go up and down depending on supply and demand in the United States and around the world.

Step 2: Manufacturing

After processing, recyclables are made into new products at a recycling plant or similar facility. More and more of today's products are being manufactured with recycled content.

Recycled materials are also used in new ways such as recovered glass in asphalt to pave roads or recovered plastic in carpeting and park benches.

Step 3: Purchasing New Products Made from Recycled Materials

You help close the recycling loop by buying new products made from recycled materials. There are thousands of products that contain recycled content. When you go shopping, look for the following:

- Products that can be easily recycled
- Products that contain recycled content

Below are some of the terms used:

- ◆ Recycled-content product - The product was manufactured with recycled materials either collected from a recycling program or from waste recovered during the normal manufacturing process. The label will sometimes include how much of the content came from recycled materials.
- ◆ Post-consumer content - Very similar to recycled content, but the material comes only from recyclables collected from consumers or businesses through a recycling program.
- ◆ Recyclable product - Products that can be collect-

ed, processed, and manufactured into new products after they have been used. These products do not necessarily contain recycled materials. Remember not all kinds of recyclables may be collected in your community, so be sure to check with your local recycling program before you buy.

Some common products you can find that are made with recycled content include the following:

- ⇒ Aluminum cans
- ⇒ Car bumpers
- ⇒ Carpeting
- ⇒ Cereal boxes
- ⇒ Comic books
- ⇒ Egg cartons
- ⇒ Glass containers
- ⇒ Laundry detergent bottles
- ⇒ Motor oil
- ⇒ Nails
- ⇒ Newspapers
- ⇒ Paper towels
- ⇒ Steel products
- ⇒ Trash bags



Challenges to Recycling System

While the benefits of recycling are clear, the current system still faces many challenges.

- ◆ Many people are confused about what items can be recycled, where they can be recycled and how. This often leads to recyclables going in the trash or trash going in the recycling bin.
- ◆ America's recycling infrastructure has not kept pace with today's waste stream. Communication between the manufacturers of new materials and products and the recycling industry needs to be improved to prepare for and optimally manage the recycling of new materials.
- ◆ Domestic markets for recycled materials need to be strengthened in the United States. Historically, some of the recycled materials generated in the U.S. have been exported internationally. However, changing international policies have limited the export of materials. Improving communication among the different sectors of the recycling sys-

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Recycling in the United States

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tem is needed to strengthen the development of existing materials markets and to develop new innovative markets.

- ◆ We need to better integrate recycled materials and end-of-life management into product and packaging designs.
- ◆ More consistent measurement methodologies are necessary to improve recycling system performance. These more standardized metrics can then be used to create effective goals and track progress.

What is Being Done?

Draft National Recycling Strategy: EPA has developed the draft National Recycling Strategy with a focus on advancing the national municipal solid waste (MSW) recycling system. It identifies strategic objectives and

stakeholder-led actions to create a stronger, more resilient, and cost-effective recycling system.

Recycling Pledge: EPA invites U.S.-based organizations to sign the America Recycles pledge. Signing the pledge signifies interest in participating in dialogue and taking action to improve the recycling system.

America Recycles Day: Every year on November 15, EPA reminds everyone of the importance and impact of recycling through education and outreach.

Basel Convention: The United States is a signatory to the Basel Convention, but has not yet become a Party to the Convention. The Basel Convention establishes standards for the transboundary movement of various types of waste.

Longknife Recognized as Climate Warrior

By Dennis Longknife, Jr., Climate Change Coordinator



Our Climate Change Mobile Exhibit Displays that is currently being housed in the Missoula Public Library. It is part of our Resilience MT: Project that we will be working on and will bring the climate Exhibit to Fort Belknap next spring, after we get participation from our local high-schools and Aaniiih Nakoda College. That is Me, Robin Saha/Professor of Environmental Studies at University of Montana, and Beth Covitt/Head of Science, Education and Research at University of Montana (in the cap). Beth manages the SpectrUM Discovery Program that will be developing our mobile Exhibits.



Certificates were presented to me by Shasta Gaughen/Environmental Director and THPO Officer, for the Pala Band of Mission Indians, for my participation and presentation at the Climate Change and Health Summit, in Pala Casino, Spa and Resort "We recognize the FBIC's ongoing leadership and efforts in achieving the following stage of climate and health adaptation. The other certificate was for being a "Climate Change Warrior", and being Resilient and persevering through all the challenges and setbacks, in the face of a changing climate, in completing the FBIC Climate Change Adaptation Plan.



EPA

United States Environmental Protection Agency



EPA 820-F-17-019

EPA Office of Science and Technology

September 2017

TAS for the Water Quality Standards Program

<https://www.epa.gov/sites/default/files/2017-07/documents/tas-overview-wqs.pdf>

Overview

Water quality standards (WQS) provide the regulatory and scientific foundation for protecting water quality under the Clean Water Act (CWA, or the Act). Under the Act, EPA can authorize eligible tribes to set their own WQS which, like state WQS, can be submitted to EPA for review and approval and used to define water quality goals and set pollutant limits for waters within their jurisdiction. This authorization for tribes is commonly called “TAS” for treatment in a similar manner as a state for CWA purposes.

To become authorized, tribes must apply to EPA and show that they meet certain basic requirements.¹ Before approving an application, EPA provides notice to adjacent state(s), tribe(s), and local stakeholders and an opportunity for these entities to provide input on the tribe’s assertion of authority.

Once authorized for TAS, a tribe can seek federal approval of its WQS so that they can be used for all purposes under the CWA, including enforceable regulatory actions. WQS consist of designated uses for water bodies, water quality criteria to protect those uses, and an antidegradation policy. To obtain federal approval of its WQS, a tribe must comply with EPA’s implementing regulations² by developing all elements of its WQS, holding a public hearing on those WQS,

adopting final WQS under tribal law, and submitting them to EPA for review. Upon EPA approval, the tribe’s WQS will be effective for CWA purposes and will apply to the reservation waters covered by the TAS approval.

Establishing WQS is an important step in protecting water quality. WQS not only set water quality goals for a tribe’s water bodies, but also serve as the regulatory basis for establishing water quality-based treatment controls and strategies. For example, to control discharges to the tribe’s waters, EPA establishes enforceable effluent limits in National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permits that derive from and comply with the tribe’s EPA-approved WQS.³ Tribes with TAS for WQS can also issue water quality certifications to ensure that discharges to reservation waters that are subject to federal permits and licenses will comply with the tribe’s WQS. Additionally, tribes can monitor the quality of their waters to help identify waters not meeting their WQS and to help develop pollutant reduction plans.⁴

Tribes interested in knowing more about TAS for the WQS program may visit EPA’s Tribes and Water Quality Standards Web site or contact the EPA Regional Office for their area.

¹ CWA section 518 authorizes EPA to “treat an Indian tribe as a state” for purposes of administering WQS if the tribe meets specific conditions: being federally recognized, having a governing body carrying out substantial powers and duties, being reasonably expected to be capable of carrying out the program, and having authority to manage and protect water resources within the borders of an Indian reservation.

² See 40 CFR part 131.

³ A tribe can also apply to EPA for TAS authority to issue such NPDES permits. To do so a tribe would need to provide materials to establish its TAS eligibility for the CWA section 402 program.

⁴ A tribe can also apply to EPA for TAS authority to issue lists of impaired waters and establish total maximum daily load plans for EPA’s approval. To do so a tribe would need to provide materials to establish its TAS eligibility for the CWA section 303(d) program.

TAS for the Water Quality Standards Program

<https://www.epa.gov/sites/default/files/2017-07/documents/tas-wqs-faq.pdf>

Frequently Asked Questions

This document answers frequently asked questions about how tribes can become eligible to be treated in a similar manner as states for the water quality standards and water quality certification programs under the Clean Water Act, and how tribes would administer these programs.

Abbreviations

CWA	Clean Water Act
FAQ	frequently asked question
NPDES	National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System
TAS	treatment of a tribe in a similar manner as a state to enable the tribe to carry out a Clean Water Act program
TMDL	total maximum daily load
WQS	water quality standard or standards

General Questions about TAS for WQS

1. Why do tribes seek TAS for the WQS program?

EPA's longstanding Indian policy encourages and supports tribal efforts to administer their own environmental programs. To date, over 50 tribes have applied for and received TAS authorization to administer the WQS program, a larger number than for any other EPA regulatory program.*

These tribes generally share an interest in restoring and maintaining the quality of their surface waters, which serve many purposes including providing drinking water and healthy aquatic life, and supporting cultural and traditional tribal uses. With EPA-approved WQS come many important protections established in the CWA, including enforceable controls on pollutants from specific dischargers. Refer to tribal case studies, video, and publications on EPA's Web site.

* For the current number of tribes with TAS authorization see "EPA Actions on Tribal Water Quality Standards and Contacts" on EPA's web site at <https://www.epa.gov/wqs-tech/epa-actions-tribal-waterquality-standards-and-contacts>.

2. Is a tribe required to apply for TAS?

No. A tribe is free to choose whether to apply for TAS and for which programs. This paper is designed for tribes interested in seeking TAS for the WQS and water quality certification programs under sections 303(c) and 401 of the CWA, respectively.

Obtaining TAS Authority for WQS

3. What requirements must a tribe meet in order to obtain approval of a TAS application under the CWA?

In 1987, Congress amended the CWA by adding section 518 to address the role of tribes. Section 518 provides authority for EPA to approve eligible tribes to administer certain CWA programs. In particular, section 518(e) and EPA's regulation at 40 CFR 131.8 describe the criteria a tribe must meet in order to be eligible for TAS for the WQS program. A tribe must show that it:

- is federally recognized by the Secretary of the U.S. Department of the Interior;
- has a governing body carrying out substantial governmental duties and powers over a reservation;
- is proposing to carry out water quality standards functions that pertain to the management and protection of water resources within the borders of an Indian reservation and has requisite legal authority (refer to FAQs #4 and #5); and
- is reasonably expected to be capable of carrying out the functions of an effective WQS program.

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TAS for the Water Quality Standards Program

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4. Which tribal lands and waters can be included in a TAS application?

Under CWA section 518, tribes can seek eligibility to administer CWA regulatory programs over their entire reservations. Tribes can seek TAS with respect to water resources pertaining to any type of on-reservation land, including, for example, reservation land held in trust by the United States for a tribe, reservation land owned by or held in trust for a member of the tribe, and reservation land owned by non-tribal members. Conversely, tribes cannot obtain TAS under the CWA for water resources pertaining to any non-reservation Indian country or any other type of non-reservation land. Refer to 81 FR 30183 at 30191.

The term “reservation” includes:

- *Formal Indian reservations* established through federal treaties with tribes, federal statutes, or Executive Orders of the President.
- Tribal trust lands validly set aside for Indian tribes, sometimes termed informal reservations. Such trust lands have the same status as formal reservations for purposes of EPA’s programs. Some tribes may have tribal trust lands within the borders of a formal reservation, or in addition to, and separate from, a formal reservation. For other tribes, such tribal trust lands may constitute the tribe’s entire reservation land base. In any case, tribal trust lands, wherever located, qualify as within the borders of an Indian reservation.¹

In its TAS application for WQS, a tribe should provide a map or legal description of the lands and waters for which it seeks TAS.

5. What authority does a tribe need for TAS?

EPA’s regulation at 40 CFR 131.8(b)(3)(ii) specifies that the tribe’s TAS application should include a statement by the tribe’s legal counsel (or equivalent official) that describes the tribe’s assertion of authority. Section 518 of the CWA includes an express delegation of authority by Congress to Indian tribes to administer regulatory programs over their entire reservations, subject to the eligibility requirements in section 518 (refer to 81 FR

30183, May 16, 2016). Thus, the tribe’s legal statement can generally rely on this congressional delegation of authority as the source of its authority to regulate its entire reservation under the CWA without distinguishing among various categories of on-reservation land.

The tribe, however, may need to supply additional information to address any potential impediments to the tribe’s ability to effectuate the delegation of authority. Such impediments may include, for example, a separate federal statute that limits the tribe’s regulatory authority.

6. Is there an application form for TAS?

No, there is no form or pre-set format for a tribal application. However, EPA has developed a non-mandatory TAS application template that a tribe can use to structure its application for the WQS program. The template contains text that a tribe can use directly where appropriate, and guides the tribe to insert or attach any additional information that EPA does not already have about the tribe’s qualifications.

Tribal applications should be transmitted by letter from the tribe’s leadership to the EPA Regional Administrator requesting TAS and should include the documentation required to show that the tribe meets the eligibility criteria in EPA’s regulation at 40 CFR 131.8 (see FAQ #3). EPA encourages tribes to (1) contact the EPA Regional Office staff for their advice and assistance, and (2) use the TAS application template to organize the needed documentation.

7. How long will it take for a tribe to obtain TAS status?

The EPA places a high priority on efficient and effective review of TAS applications and timely decisions, and will work with an applicant tribe throughout the TAS application process specified in EPA regulations at 40 CFR part 131.8. See a description of EPA’s four procedural steps for tribal TAS applications. These steps can generally be completed within one year, but can take a longer or shorter time depending on the complexity of

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TAS for the Water Quality Standards Program

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the application and the availability of tribal and EPA resources.

8. Will the adjacent state(s) have an opportunity to comment on a tribe's TAS application?

Yes. Under EPA's regulations, EPA must provide notice of a tribe's TAS application to appropriate governmental entities (e.g., adjacent states, tribes, other federal entities) and an opportunity for such entities to comment on the applicant tribe's assertion of authority. As a matter of established practice, EPA also provides local governments and the local public an opportunity to comment on the tribe's assertion of authority.

This does not imply that any potential commenters have veto power over tribal TAS applications. Rather, the procedure is intended to identify relevant jurisdictional information and any competing jurisdictional claim and thereby ensure that EPA's decision making is well informed and the tribe has the necessary authority to administer the WQS program. The Agency will not rely solely on the assertions of a commenter who challenges the tribe's assertion of authority, and the tribe will have an opportunity to respond to such comments. In its decision, EPA will make an independent evaluation of the tribal showing and all available information.

9. What does it mean if a tribe receives TAS for WQS?

EPA's approval of a tribe's TAS eligibility for the WQS program:

- Does mean that the tribe has full authority – and responsibility – to adopt WQS for its reservation waters and to submit the WQS to EPA for approval or disapproval. Refer to Administering a Water Quality Standards Program below.
- Does mean that the tribe is automatically eligible for TAS for the water quality certification program under CWA section 401, as provided in 40 CFR 131.4(c), unless the tribe elects not to seek such eligibility. Refer to Administering a Water Quality Certification Program below.

- Does not mean that the tribe is approved for TAS status for any other CWA program. A tribe needs to apply for TAS for each CWA program it seeks, such as section 106 water pollution control grants, the section 303(d) program for listing impaired waters and establishing TMDLs, and the section 402 NPDES permits program.
- Does not mean that any tribal standards previously adopted under tribal law are automatically applicable under the CWA. Any such standards would need to be approved under EPA's regulations before they could become applicable under the CWA. Refer to Administering a Water Quality Standards Program below.

Administering a Water Quality Standards Program

10. When does an authorized tribe need to adopt its initial WQS?

EPA expects a newly authorized tribe² to adopt its initial WQS as soon as possible within three years after being notified that TAS status has been approved.³ EPA believes that this is an equitable arrangement, and that tribes should be allowed sufficient time to develop their programs and adopt appropriate WQS for reservation waters.

Using the Model WQS Template on EPA's Web site can significantly shorten the time to draft WQS.

A tribe can either (1) initially apply for TAS and then develop WQS later, or (2) submit both the TAS application and the WQS for EPA review at the same time. EPA cannot approve the WQS, however, until TAS is approved.

11. What is the process for development and EPA review of tribal WQS?

Like states, authorized tribes must follow the procedures for developing EPA-approved standards set forth in EPA's regulations.⁴ See the WQS Handbook on EPA's Web site for details. As re-

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sources allow, EPA provides technical assistance to tribes in establishing standards that are appropriate for the reservation and consistent with the Clean Water Act. The key steps for an authorized tribe are:

- a. Developing its own WQS, including designating uses for its waters, determining which water quality criteria are needed to protect the uses, and establishing an antidegradation policy and implementation methods. The WQS should cover all waters specified in the TAS approval and comply with EPA's regulations.
- b. Adopting WQS under tribal law and EPA's regulations after holding a public hearing, inviting public comments, and considering all comments received.
- c. Submitting adopted WQS and necessary supporting information to EPA for review and approval or disapproval, and making any corrections needed if EPA disapproves elements of the WQS. Once approved, the WQS are applicable for all CWA purposes.

After the WQS are approved and applicable under the CWA, authorized tribes are expected to carry out their antidegradation implementation methods and may interpret their WQS as necessary to facilitate various other implementation actions.

In the longer term, tribes also need to conduct a review of their WQS every three years (triennial review) and adopt any needed new or revised WQS as in b and c above, in accordance with EPA's regulations.

12. Do EPA-approved state WQS apply to any reservation waters?

Under principles of federal law, states generally lack authority to regulate on Indian reservations. Thus, EPA-approved state WQS generally do not

apply on Indian reservations. There are uncommon circumstances where a separate federal law grants a particular state the authority to establish WQS on an Indian reservation. Where EPA expressly approves such a state's authority and the state's WQS for waters on an Indian reservation, such WQS will apply under the CWA for those waters. Please check with the appropriate EPA Regional Office for information about any state WQS applicable to specific tribal waters.

13. Are state and tribal WQS expected to be compatible?

Tribal WQS should be developed considering the quality and uses of waters entering and leaving reservations. EPA's regulations at 40 CFR 131.10 require that a state or tribe ensure that its WQS provide for the attainment and maintenance of the WQS of downstream waters. Thus, it is important that the tribes recognize what the adjacent state or tribal WQS are even though there is no requirement for the standards to be identical.

A tribe can consider the EPA-approved WQS of adjacent states or tribes as well as the Model WQS Template on EPA's Web site as a starting point for developing its own WQS. In considering previously-approved adjacent WQS, however, the tribe should coordinate with the EPA Regional Office to help determine whether the WQS are up to date with EPA's requirements and the latest scientific information.

To the extent that differences do arise between the tribe's WQS and a state's WQS, EPA encourages the tribe and state to resolve their differences without EPA involvement, ideally before either one begins the WQS adoption process. EPA is available upon request, however, to help resolve state-tribal disputes over differing WQS on common bodies of water. Refer to the Tribal-State WQS Dispute Resolution Mechanism on EPA's Web site.

¹ This reflects EPA's longstanding approach to tribal trust lands. Refer to 81 FR 30183 at 30192.

² An authorized tribe is a tribe that EPA has found eligible for TAS under CWA section 518 for the WQS program.

³ The three-year time frame corresponds to that provided to states under the provisions of the 1965 Federal Water Pollution Control Act when the WQS program was created.

⁴ The primary EPA WQS regulations are at 40 CFR part 131 (Water Quality Standards). Additional requirements for waters of the Great Lakes system are in 40 CFR part 132 (Water Quality Guidance for the Great Lakes System).

INTRODUCING THE NEW NRCS TRIBAL CONSERVATIONIST

By Trisha Cracroft, Montana State Tribal Liaison/American Indian/Alaskan Native SEPM acting Outreach Coordinator

Michael Kinsey is a new hire for the American Indian Tribal Liaison position at the Duty Location of Chinook, MT, in the US Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation Services. Michael has an interest in gaining knowledge and has demonstrated this with his education, which includes an Associate of Science in Natural Resources Aaniiih Nakoda College, a Bachelor of Science in Biology from Montana State University-Northern, and a Master of Science in Fish, Wildlife, and Conservation Biology from Colorado State University. Michael has previously worked as a Co-Director of the Buffalo Research and Education Center and the Water Center at Aaniiih Nakoda College, where he worked on several research projects focusing on prairie ecology and water quality on the Fort Belknap Indian Reservation. Michael was also previously the Wildlife Biologist for the Fort Belknap Fish and Wildlife Department for the Fort Belknap Indian Community where he worked on the Black-footed Ferret Reintroduction Project.

Michael is thrilled and excited to begin working as the American Indian Tribal Liaison, joining the team, and helping Tribes identify problems and finding solutions!



Montana State University Employment Opportunities **Extension Agent— Agriculture and 4-H Youth Development—Fort Belknap Reservation**

Go to <https://jobs.montana.edu/postings/39195> for more information.

POSITION DETAILS

Position Information

Announcement Number: FAC - VA - 24015

For questions regarding this position, please contact: Tracy Mosley at 406-223-4727 or tmosley@montana.edu

Classification Title: Extension Agent
Working Title: Extension Agent - Agriculture and 4-H Youth Development -Fort Belknap Reservation

Brief Position Overview:

- This position is located in Fort Belknap Agency, Montana.
- The primary duty for Reservation Extension Faculty is to assess local community needs, then to develop, implement, and evaluate Extension programming to meet those needs. The emphases of this Fort Belknap Reservation Extension agent position are in the areas of Agriculture and 4-H Youth Development. The Fort Belknap Reservation Extension office is staffed by two half-time agents, one full-time agent, and one SNAP-Ed Instructor.

Applications will be:

Screening of applications will begin on December 1, 2023; however, applications will continue to be accepted until an adequate applicant pool has been established.

Special Instructions:

Please note - for this position - Five (5) references have been requested.

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*Wishing you
and your Family
Peace, Health,
Happiness, and Prosperity
in the coming year.*



*Merry Christmas &
Happy New Year!*

From the Fort Belknap
Environmental Protection Department