

Region 9 Tribal Newsletter

United States Environmental Protection Agency, Region 9, Pacific Southwest

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REBRANDING ALERT!

The R9 Tribal Newsletter email address has been changed to R9Communities@epa.gov! This rebranding will allow for enhanced communications to tribes and other communities in R9. The quarterly newsletter email notifications will now arrive to your inbox from the new R9communities email address. The new email address will also be used to share relevant updates on the Environmental Justice Program (EJ), their community office hours, or other important EJ updates. The new email address replaces the prior one, and you may use it for submitting your newsletter ideas and feedback to the R9 Tribal Newsletter Coordinator.

Be sure to keep a lookout for emails from R9communities in your inbox!

Musings from the Director, Superfund and Emergency Management Division

I begin writing this note as I await a coordination call with our colleagues at the Navajo Nation Environmental Protection Agency regarding the United States Environmental Protection Agency's (U.S. EPA) work with them on cleaning up abandoned uranium mines on the Navajo Nation. This unfortunate legacy, probably the most significant environmental INJUSTICE in scope I have encountered, presents a daunting challenge for them and for us as an Agency. But it is also a reminder that with challenges come opportunities in all their different forms. Opportunities which speak to issues of a larger context: unemployment, poverty, trust, and sovereignty to name a few.

As public servants at the U.S. EPA, we are guided by many sources of information – our statutes, regulations and ever-evolving policies, procedures, and guidance documents. As such, I've always wondered about the words "public welfare" which are used in several of our core statutes, like the Clean Air Act (CAA) and the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA). Those words are so broad and easy to overlook. But they always made me think. Those words hit home for me during a discussion, several years ago, about the cleanup of the Tuba City Dump, a long-standing cleanup challenge for the U.S. EPA and the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), who operated this, now closed, dumpsite many years ago that blighted Hopi and Navajo lands. How could we accomplish a cleanup that met the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) and CERCLA legal, policy, and cost criteria AND preserve most of the site for productive reuse, particularly by the Hopi Tribe where most of the site was located? Of course, I also pondered the U.S. EPA's 1984 Indian Policy and the meaning of the trust responsibility, as well as what I had learned in all the previous years working closely with our tribal colleagues from so many different experiences throughout our regional purview. I have to say that all those relationships helped crystallize, at least for me, what the authors of the words "public welfare" intended when they inserted them along with the directive to protect the environment and public health as part of our mission. Addressing public welfare, in all its forms, has always been a part of our mandate.

SAVE THE DATE!

The Fall RTOC will take place *virtually* on October 18. The Tribal & U.S. EPA R9 Annual Conference will convene *virtually* from October 19-21. See page 6 for more details.

(Musings from the Director Continued...)

As I come to the end of my U.S. EPA career, I am heartened by the new administration's commitment to tackle lingering economic and environmental injustices that pervade tribal and other low income, minority communities. And this administration has proposed budget initiatives and legislation to back up that priority, probably at a scale greater than I've seen from past administrations in my 36 years at the U.S. EPA. We at the U.S. EPA may feel challenged by this renewed focus on these lingering injustices because of perceived and real legal and policy obstacles. I would assert, however, that our public welfare mandate has always been broad enough to tackle the many forms of economic and environmental injustices wherever we find them. I can't think of a better team of folks like the

good people in U.S. EPA Region 9 and our tribal partners to take this challenge on through your longstanding creativity, dedication, and tenaciousness! I look forward to reading about your successes.

Flashback to June 1998 – my first meeting as the co-chair of the Regional Tribal Operations Committee or RTOC as we all short-hand it. It was at Hoopa. Little did I know at the time that that meeting was the beginning of a journey of learning, a journey filled with challenges, frustrations, successes, and many moments of clarity. For that, I will always be grateful to my friends and colleagues from tribal governments and from the U.S. EPA with whom I've had the honor to work with all these years. Thank you all!!!

Si se puede!!!

Enrique Manzanilla

Director, Superfund and Emergency Management Division

Regulatory News

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Air and Radiation Division

The U.S. EPA Region 9 Air and Radiation Division (ARD) is currently reviewing the following State Implementation Plan (SIP) submittals from state and local air agencies. These SIP submittals address requirements under the Clean Air Act related to plans to attain the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS), New Source Review (NSR) permitting programs or rules, and prohibitory rules to reduce air pollutant emissions. The plans and rules state and local air districts submit would not apply to any areas of Indian Country. If you would like information on any of these SIP submittals, please email the point of contact for the submittal type.

Plan Submittals (Contact: Anita Lee, Manager of the Air Planning Office, lee.anita@epa.gov)

- Hawaii Interstate Transport SIP for 2015 Ozone NAAQS
 - San Joaquin Valley (California) Attainment Plan for the 1997 24-hour PM2.5 NAAQS
 - San Joaquin Valley (California) Attainment Plan for the 2012 annual PM2.5 NAAQS
 - West Mojave Desert (California) Attainment Plan for the 2008 Ozone NAAQS
 - Sacramento (California) Attainment Plan for 2008 Ozone NAAQS
 - Clark County (Nevada) second 10-year Maintenance Plan for the 1971 Carbon Monoxide NAAQS
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- Clark County (Nevada) Maintenance Plan Motor Vehicle Emissions Budget Revision for the 1997 Ozone NAAQS
- Indian Wells Valley (California) 2nd 10-year Maintenance Plan for the 1987 PM10 NAAQS
- San Diego (California) Motor Vehicle Emissions Budget Adequacy Determination for the 2008 and 2015 Ozone NAAQS
- California Base Year Emissions Inventories for nonattainment areas for the 2015 Ozone NAAQS
- Arizona Base Year Emissions Inventories for nonattainment areas for the 2015 Ozone NAAQS
- Nogales (Arizona) Redesignation Request and Maintenance Plan for the 2006 PM2.5 NAAQS
- Nevada Infrastructure SIP for 2012 PM2.5 NAAQS
- Nevada Infrastructure SIP for the 2015 Ozone NAAQS
- Nevada Infrastructure SIP for the 2015 Ozone NAAQS
- Arizona Infrastructure and Interstate Transport SIP for 2015 Ozone NAAQS
- California Infrastructure and Interstate Transport SIP for the 2015 Ozone NAAQS

Permitting Rule Submittals (Contact: Laura Yannayon, Manager of the Air Permits Office, yannayon.laura@epa.gov)

- San Diego (California) NSR Rule Exemption
- Tuolumne (California) NSR Rule
- Tehama (California) NSR Rule
- Amador (California) NSR Rule
- Butte (California) NSR Rule
- Antelope Valley (California) NSR Rule
- Mojave Desert (California) NSR Rule
- Clark County (Nevada) NSR Rules and 2015 Ozone Certification
- Feather River (California) 2015 Ozone Certification
- Imperial (California) 2015 Ozone Certification
- San Joaquin Valley (California) 2015 Ozone Certification
- Ventura (California) 2015 Ozone Certification
- Yolo-Solano (California) 2015 Ozone Certification

Prohibitory Rule Submittals (Contact: Doris Lo, Manager of the Air Rules Office, lo.doris@epa.gov)

- Maricopa (Arizona) Air Quality Standards Rule
- Maricopa (Arizona) Outdoor Fires and Solid Fuel Burning Rule
- Maricopa (Arizona) Residential Wood Burning Rule
- South Coast (California) Flares Emissions Rule Revision
- Mojave Desert and South Coast (California) Coating Rules
- San Joaquin Valley (California) Agricultural Equipment Incentive Measure
- California Vapor Recovery Cargo Tank Rule

Program Updates

General Assistance Program

GAP Guidance Revisions Workgroups Kickoff

On Thursday, August 5, the American Indian Environmental Office (AIEO) hosted the kick-off call for the General Assistance Program (GAP) Guidance Revisions Workgroups. There are 5 workgroups ranging in size from 8-12 with regional, national program, and tribal participants. The workgroups will be meeting over the next several months to jointly draft proposed revisions to the 2013 GAP guidance structure and other critical components, including integrating EPA/Tribal Environmental Plans (ETEPs) and performance measures, test drives, incorporating GAP into a Performance Partnership Grant (PPG), and tribal technical assistance needs.

Quality Assurance

Call for Tribal Participants to Help Revise the U.S. EPA QAPP and QMP Requirements and Guidance Documents

The U.S. EPA is seeking tribal participation, particularly tribal scientists and environmental staff with experience in writing or updating Quality Management Plans (QMPs) and/or Quality Assurance Program Plans (QAPPs) for their U.S. EPA grants, in revising three of the Agency's most used and downloaded Quality Assurance (QA) documents:

- U.S. EPA QA/R-2, U.S. EPA Requirements for Quality Management Plans (March 2001)
- U.S. EPA QA/R-5, U.S. EPA Requirements for Quality Assurance Project Plans (March 2001)
- U.S. EPA QA/G-5, Guidance for Quality Assurance Project Plans (December 2002)

In the revision process, R2 and R5 will be converted to Quality Standards and G5 will remain a guidance.

There are a variety of ways tribes can participate:

- Take part in listening sessions.
- Attend document revision webinars on QA topics of interest.
- Review and comment on draft QMP and QAPP Standards during pre-clearance review.
- Provide feedback in implementing revised QA documents.

Tribal QA Listening Sessions will occur on September 21 and 27, 2021.

Tribal QA Document Revision Webinars will occur on the following dates:

- QMP Standard: Part 1: September 28, 2021 and Part 2: September 30, 2021
- QAPP Standard: Part 1: October 5, 2021 and Part 2: October 7, 2021

For more information, to find out how to take part in this effort, and to receive direct invitations to the listening sessions and webinars, please contact Linda Himmelbauer (himmelbauer.linda@epa.gov), Directives Project Lead, or Katherine Chalfant (chalfant.katherine@epa.gov), Acting Enterprise Quality Management Division (EQMD) Director. You may also contact your regional QA Manager by following this link: [Managing the Quality of Environmental Information](#).

Tribal Project Success Stories

Rincon Band of Luiseño Indians Trash Truck Upgrade

The Rincon Band of Luiseño Indians (Rincon Tribe) is a federally recognized Indian tribe that occupies a 4,688-acre (7.3 square mile) reservation in the unincorporated community of Valley Center, which is located in north central San Diego County, California, approximately 45 miles northeast of San Diego, California.

The Rincon Tribe covers the cost of curbside trash pickup for tribal members and lineal heads of households and provides the service for a reasonable monthly fee to other residents. Owning and operating the trash truck helps contribute towards the self-sufficiency of the Rincon Tribe. In total, an estimated 750 people benefit from this service. In addition to picking up trash from reservation homes, the Rincon Tribe also picks up trash weekly from the 12 bus stops located on the reservation, the Tribal Court, and the churches located on the reservation.

In the summer of 2019, the Rincon Tribal Government faced a dilemma: the existing 2007 trash truck would not be able to meet upcoming, new 2021 California Air Resources Board (CARB) emission requirements, and it could not be modified or retrofitted to meet them. As a result, the truck would no longer be able to receive tags allowing it to operate on California (i.e., off-reservation) roads. This would mean the truck could no longer take trash to the off-reservation landfill or drive to off-reservation automotive businesses to receive maintenance or repairs (without needing to be towed back and forth on a flatbed truck).



Arrival of the new trash truck, Rincon Reservation, July 27, 2021

A committee of Tribal Administration, General Services, Public Safety, Environmental, Housing, and Finance Department personnel was created to find a solution to the problem. The committee evaluated several different options and determined that the best path forward was to purchase a new trash truck. This solution was chosen because it would provide an efficient, affordable, and reliable solution for trash pickup on the Rincon Reservation that would also improve air quality of the reservation by significantly lowering air emissions. It would reduce personnel's contact with the trash when they collect it and minimize the direct financial impact to the tribe – all of which became especially important after the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic.



New Trash Cans

The Rincon Environmental Department searched for grant opportunities and other funding solutions and submitted a request for supplemental funding to their U.S. EPA Project Officer under their existing GAP grant. Additionally, the Rincon Tribe applied to become a beneficiary of the Volkswagen Diesel Emissions Environmental Mitigation Trust, which was specifically formed to fund environmental mitigation projects that reduce emissions of nitrogen oxides (NOx) on tribal lands. Replacing an old trash truck with a newer one that produces significantly lower air emissions qualified as an allowable project under that settlement. GAP and the Volkswagen Trust both contributed approximately half the funding cost for the trash truck and new trash cans.

On July 27, 2021, approximately one-year later, the new Peterbilt 520 trash truck finally arrived at the Rincon Reservation. It has a number of advantages over the old trash truck:

- It produces 85% less NOx emissions from the tailpipe than the old truck.
- It has an arm on the side that automatically picks up the trash can and empties it into the trash truck.
- It has a Global Positioning System (GPS) and a back-up camera for increased safety.
- It has a quieter engine.
- Its engine provides more power in a lightweight and fuel-efficient design.
- It's easier to maneuver and turn on tight, narrow reservation roads.



The new trash truck emptying its first trash can.

Success Story Contributed by the Rincon Band of Luiseño Indians

RTOC and Tribal & U.S. EPA Annual Conference

The Regional Tribal Operations Committee (RTOC) is a working committee of the U.S. EPA and tribal personnel co-chaired by a U.S. EPA representative and a tribal representative. The U.S. EPA designates its RTOC representatives through internal mechanisms. All tribes within Region 9 are considered members of the RTOC. Tribal representatives to the RTOC are selected through government-to-government communication, by tribal leaders in various geographical areas within Region 9.

Summer RTOC Recap

On July 28, 2021, the Region 9 RTOC co-chairs Mervin Wright Jr. (Pyramid Lake Paiute Tribe) and Laura Ebbert (U.S. EPA) convened the virtual Summer RTOC meeting. This was the fourth RTOC meeting convened virtually and was well-attended again with over 100 participants.

This meeting provided a robust agenda chock-full of interesting sessions on topics, such as consultation, the budget, water program updates, indoor air quality, and more. The Summer RTOC presentations and meeting materials can be found here: [Region 9 RTOC Meeting: Summer 2021](#).

The Fall RTOC will convene virtually on Monday, October 18, the day before convening the Tribal & U.S. EPA Region 9 Annual Conference. Please check the RTOC website for more details and be sure to register for the Fall RTOC: [Region 9 RTOC Website](#).

Tribal & U.S. EPA Region 9 Annual Conference Updates

The Tribal & U.S. EPA Region 9 Annual Conference co-sponsors, the Pala Band of Mission Indians, and the U.S. EPA, are pleased to announce that this year's conference theme will be "Tribal Land, Tribal Knowledge, Tribal Sovereignty." The Tribal & U.S. EPA Region 9 Annual Conference brings together more than 300 participants — from tribal nations located across Arizona, California, and Nevada, and representatives from federal, state, and local agencies, nonprofits and academia.

After much consideration the conference co-sponsors made the decision to convene this year's conference 100% virtually from October 19 through 21, 2021. While we all look forward to the day we can meet face-to-

face again, we made this decision with the health and safety of participants in mind. Despite this change, the conference organizers continue to plan a robust and exciting agenda of speakers, sessions, and online experiences for conference attendees via the virtual conferencing platform [Accelevents!](#)

To register and see the latest updates from the event organizers, please check the conference website: [Tribal/U.S. EPA Region 9 Annual Conference Website.](#)

Tribal Resources

U.S. EPA, U.S. Forest Service Release Improved AirNow Fire and Smoke Map to Equip the Public with Information and Resources on Wildfire Smoke

The U.S. EPA and the U.S. Forest Service have released updates to the popular AirNow Fire and Smoke Map to help protect communities across the country from the devastating impacts of wildfire smoke.



Screenshot from U.S. EPA Fire and Smoke Map, taken September 2, 2021

The U.S. EPA and the U.S. Forest Service launched the Fire and Smoke Map as a pilot in 2020 to provide the public information on fire locations, smoke plumes and air quality all in one place. The map quickly became a key wildfire smoke information source for the public, with more than 7.4 million views in the map's first three months.

Providing users with the most localized air quality information possible, the Fire and Smoke Map pulls data from monitors that regularly report to AirNow. These temporary monitors, such as those the U.S. Forest Service and air agencies have deployed near fires, and crowd-sourced data from nearly 10,000 low-cost sensors that measure fine particle pollution, the major harmful pollutant in smoke. The map also provides easy access to smoke forecast outlooks, which the Forest Service provides when Air Resource Advisors have been deployed to wildland fires.

During 2021, the two agencies have made several improvements to the map based on feedback from state and local air agencies, tribes, and members of the public. The updates include a “dashboard” that map users will see by clicking on a monitor or sensor. The dashboard gives users quick access to key information that can help them plan their activities: the current Air Quality Index (AQI) category at the monitor/sensor location; trend information showing whether air quality is getting better or worse; and information about actions to consider taking, based on the current AQI. The updated Fire and Smoke Map is also more “mobile friendly” for people who visit the [AirNow.gov](#) website from a smartphone or tablet.

Learn more about AirNow Fire and Smoke Map enhancements by going to a webinar recording with slides: [AirNow Fire and Smoke Map: Extension of the U.S.-Wide Correction for PurpleAir PM2.5 Sensors Webinar Archive.](#) This webinar briefly introduces the map, some of the anticipated new pilot features for 2021, and follows with a discussion of why an extended sensor data correction was needed and how it was developed.

Learn more at the Fire and Smoke Map site: [AirNow Fire and Smoke Map.](#)

Tribal Consultation

A full list of active U.S. EPA Tribal Consultation opportunities are available on the U.S. EPA's Tribal Consultation Opportunities Tracking System (TCOTS) webpage: [TCOTS Webpage](#). If interested, join the TCOTS Listserv by sending a message to, Join-epa_tcots@lists.epa.gov to receive email notifications on the latest U.S. EPA Tribal Consultations.

Each month, the Region 9 RTOC Consultation Workgroup meets to share information, updates and discuss consultation topics of interest. The workgroup is jointly chaired by Kelcey Stricker, Environmental Director of the Pechanga Environmental Department, and Jeremy Bauer, Acting Deputy Director of the U.S. EPA Region 9 Tribal, Intergovernmental, and Policy Division.

For more information or to become involved in this RTOC workgroup, please contact Kelcey (kstricker@pechangansn.gov) or Jeremy (bauer.jeremy@epa.gov).

Revising the Definition of “Waters of the United States”

The U.S. EPA and the U.S. Department of the Army, (“the agencies,” hereafter) are initiating consultation and coordination with federally recognized tribes on the agencies’ effort to revise the definition of “waters of the United States.” On June 9, 2021, the agencies announced their intent to initiate a new rulemaking process that restores the regulations in place prior to the 2015 Clean Water Rule defining “waters of the United States,” amended to be consistent with relevant Supreme Court decisions. The agencies also anticipate developing a second rulemaking informed by states, tribes, and stakeholder feedback that further refines and builds upon that regulatory foundation. A second consultation will be initiated as the agencies move closer to working on that second rule.

The agencies most recently revised these regulations in 2020 with the Navigable Waters Protection Rule: Definition of “Waters of the United States,” 85 Federal Register 22250 (April 21, 2020), which amended the regulations found in Title 33 of the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), Part 328, and Title 40 of the CFR, Part 120.

On January 20, 2021, President Biden signed Executive Order 13990, titled Protecting Public Health and the Environment and Restoring Science to Tackle the Climate Crisis, 86 Federal Register 7037 (published January 25, 2021, signed January 20, 2021). Executive Order 13990 directed federal agencies to review rules, including the Navigable Waters Protection Rule, issued in the prior four years that are, or may be, inconsistent with the policy stated in the order. Consistent with this Executive Order, the agencies have completed their review of the Navigable Waters Protection Rule and have decided to initiate a new rulemaking to revise the definition of “Waters of the United States,” as referenced above.

To help ensure tribal partners and co-regulators have the opportunity to provide early, substantial, and meaningful input on this important issue, **the comment period has been extended to October 4, 2021.**

For any questions, please contact Rose Kwok, U.S. EPA, Office of Wetlands, Oceans, and Watersheds, at CWAwotus@epa.gov or (202) 566-0657; and Stacey Jensen, Office of the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works at usarmy.pentagon.hqda-asa-cw.mbx.asa-cw-reporting@mail.mil or (703) 459-6026.

U.S. EPA/AIEO Tribal Consultation on GAP Funding Allocation

On July 19, 2021, the U.S. EPA American Indian Environmental Office (AIEO) initiated a 120-day tribal consultation with federally recognized tribes to receive input on how to improve the national allocation of the Indian Environmental General Assistance Program (GAP) funds. Under the current framework, each Region receives

an allocation driven mostly as a function of the number of federally recognized tribes in the Region multiplied by \$110,000. However, a 2008 Office of Inspector General report included a recommendation that AIEO revise its allocation methodology to take into account the tribes' environmental needs and prior progress.

AIEO hosted an introductory call for tribal leaders on August 3 and a series of regional webinars and listening sessions. **The comment deadline is November 17, 2021.**

For any questions, please contact Lisa Berrios by email at berrios.lisa@epa.gov or by phone at (202) 564-1739.

Air and Radiation Division Actions for Consultation

- A New Source Review (NSR) permit to install two emergency generators at the Graton Resort and Casino, owned and operated by the Federated Indians of Graton Rancheria.
- A Tribal Minor NSR program application to construct and operate the Morongo Travel Center from the Morongo Band of Mission Indians.

For any questions, please contact Laura Yannayon (yannayon.laura@epa.gov), Manager of the Air Permits Office.

As mentioned above, U.S. EPA tribal consultation materials, including letters and consultation plans are available on the U.S. EPA [Tribal Consultation Opportunities Tracking System \(TCOTS\)](#).

Funding Opportunities

Stay up-to-date on federal grant opportunities by using the [Grants.gov](#) search page.

U.S. EPA, Brownfields Job Training Grant

The Brownfields Job Training Grants allow nonprofits, local governments, and other organizations to recruit, train, and place unemployed and under-employed residents of areas affected by brownfield sites. Through the Job Training Program, graduates develop the necessary skills to secure full-time, sustainable employment in various aspects of hazardous and solid waste management and within the larger environmental field, including sustainable cleanup and reuse, and chemical safety. These green jobs reduce environmental contamination and build more sustainable futures for communities.

Applications are due by **October 5, 2021**. For additional information, please visit the [Brownfields Job Training Grants](#) website.

U.S. EPA, Supporting Anaerobic Digestion in Communities

The U.S. EPA is seeking applications for projects from states, tribes, territories and non-profit organizations to help reduce food loss and waste and divert food waste from landfills by expanding anaerobic digester (AD) capacity in the United States.

All applications must achieve one or more of the following objectives:

- Develop new or expand existing AD capacity for processing food waste.
 - Demonstrate solutions and/or approaches for increasing food waste AD utilization that can be replicated by other communities, governments, or other entities.
-

- Support state, tribal, and/or local government programs that seek to use AD to increase their food waste diversion rates.

Applications are due by **October 7, 2021**. Additional information is available on [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov), under Funding Opportunity Announcement **EPA-OLEM-ORCR-21-02**.

U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, Native American Affairs, Technical Assistance to Tribes

The U.S. Bureau of Reclamation's Native American Affairs Technical Assistance Program (TAP) provides technical assistance to help Indian tribes develop, manage, and protect their water and related resources. The program has supported a broad range of activities each year since its inception in the early 1990s. Activities have included water needs assessments, improved water management studies, water quality data collection and assessments, and water measurement studies. Total annual funding for the Native American Affairs TAP ranges between \$2 and \$3 million.

Work under the Native American Affairs TAP may be carried out in different ways. Sometimes the work is performed by Reclamation under cooperative working relationships with Indian tribes, which provide the tribes with opportunities to benefit from Reclamation's technical expertise and resources. Other times, Indian tribes carry out the work under Public Law 93-638. Alternatively, assistance may be provided in the form of training to enhance tribal members' knowledge and expertise in the use, protection, and development of water resources. Work may also be carried out in partnerships with other governmental or non-governmental entities, thereby enabling assistance provided to tribes with greater efficiency.

While program direction and leadership for the Native American Affairs TAP is provided by Reclamation's Native American and International Affairs Office (NAIAO) within the Commissioner's Office, the program is implemented through regional and area offices. The area office Native American Affairs Program Coordinators work with their Regional Program Managers and Indian tribes to develop project proposals, which are submitted for funding consideration. Budgetary constraints limit the number of projects which can be funded each year.

Applications are due by **October 20, 2021**. Additional information is available on [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov), under Funding Opportunity Announcement **R22AS00015** or at the Bureau of Reclamation's [Technical Assistance Program](https://www.bur.gov/technical-assistance-program) website.

U.S. EPA, Drinking Water Tribal Set-Aside Program

The U.S. EPA Region 9 has issued guidelines and procedures for applying for assistance from the Drinking Water Tribal Set Aside (DWTSA) program in Fiscal Year 2022. This program provides funding for federally recognized tribes within U.S. EPA Region 9 for public drinking water system infrastructure. Funds are awarded through direct grants to tribes or interagency agreements with the Indian Health Service. The funding will be used to address the most significant public health threats for public water systems.

Proposals are due November 20, 2021 and information can be found on the website: [Region 9 DWTSA Website](https://www.epa.gov/region9/dwt).

Call for Region 9 Tribal Project Success Stories!

Do you have an environmental project that you are proud of and would like to have highlighted in an upcoming Region 9 newsletter? Notify your U.S. EPA Project Officer or send an email to: R9Communities@epa.gov. We would like to develop and highlight a success story for each quarterly newsletter. The project should have an environmental focus and have been funded using federal grants or programs.

U.S. EPA, Diesel Emissions Reduction Act 2021 School Bus Rebate Program

The request for applications (RFA) is coming soon! The U.S. EPA 2021 Diesel Emissions Reduction Act (DERA) School Bus Rebate program will open soon. The U.S. EPA anticipates awarding over \$10 million to eligible entities to scrap older, currently operating school buses and replace them with a cleaner diesel or alternative fuel, such as natural gas or battery electric. Rebate amounts will be based on the fuel type of the replacement bus with an anticipated maximum amount of \$65,000 per school bus. For more details and to check the status of the 2021 RFA, please visit: [DERA School Bus Rebates Website](#).

American Rescue Plan Electric School Bus Rebates

The U.S. EPA anticipates awarding \$7 million under the American Rescue Plan to scrap an older, currently operating school bus and replace it with a battery electric. More information on this opportunity is coming soon!

To be notified about either of the aforementioned school bus rebate programs, please sign up to receive the [U.S. EPA West Coast Collaborative's email updates](#).

Training & Technical Assistance

Training opportunities in this newsletter are either hosted, funded, or sponsored in collaboration with the U.S. EPA. Any links to websites outside of U.S. EPA are provided for additional information that may be useful or in to our readers. The U.S. EPA can neither attest to the accuracy of these third-party sites nor endorse any nongovernment websites, companies, or applications.

Success Stories: Sustainable Materials Management of Food at Tribal Casinos

Wednesday, September 29, 2021, 11:00 AM (PDT)

Are you interested in issues facing tribal waste management programs? The U.S. EPA Office of Resource Conservation and Recovery, Tribal Waste Management Program invites tribal environmental director environmental managers, grant writers and managers, tribal waste management staff and technical providers interested in issues facing tribal waste management programs to this free webinar.

Numerous tribal-owned or operated gaming facilities and resorts have responded to opportunities and expand upon sustainable materials management programs. Applying Sustainable Materials Management (SMM) approaches can reduce waste, reduce costs, and save resources. SMM-focused efforts can also have lasting beneficial environmental and social impacts for tribes.

Please join us at the next Tribal Waste Management Program webinar where we will hear from tribal casino and resort representatives who are maximizing efforts to reduce and divert wasted food, including surplus food to local hunger relief agencies, composting food scraps from their restaurants and buff sending food scraps to a local farm for animal feed.

Follow this link to register for the webinar: [Sustainable Materials Management Webinar](#).

This webinar is part of the U.S. EPA's Tribal Waste Management Program Webinar Series. New and emerging waste management topics are the focus of the webinars, typically offered monthly. Check out the [Management Webinars website](#) for information on upcoming webinars and recordings of past webinars.



Environmental Protection Agency
Region 9 Tribal Branch
Tribal, Intergovernmental, and Policy Division

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Get in Touch!

Do you have an idea for inclusion in an upcoming newsletter? Do you have a question or comment about an article in this issue? Please submit ideas, questions, tribal success stories, original photos, or other feedback to the R9 Tribal Newsletter Coordinator, Mark Rayos, at:

R9Communities@epa.gov

R9 Tribal Programs: www.epa.gov/tribal/epaspacificsouthwest-tribal-programregion-9 **Follow Region 9 EPA on Facebook!** www.facebook.com/EPAregion9

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Please see and subscribe to our [EPA in the Pacific Southwest Newsletter](#) for more general news about the U.S. EPA in Region 9.

Protecting Human Health and the Environment