

DRAFT
MEETING SUMMARY
TRIBAL INFRASTRUCTURE TASK FORCE (ITF) PRINCIPALS MEETING
AUGUST 11, 2021

1. INTRODUCTIONS – WELCOMING OF CDC AND BUREAU OF RECLAMATION TO THE ITF

- Co-chairs Yu-Ting Guilaran and Wynne Miller of EPA welcomed attendees to the meeting and highlighted the shared priorities among the diverse agencies attending the meeting. They emphasized how all agencies are working together to align priorities to advance equity, environmental justice and to effect change at the local level.
- Bureau of Reclamation (BoR) was welcomed as an official member of the task force, and Centers for Disease Control (CDC) was welcomed as a new member.
- John Sarinsky of the CDC gave a brief introduction of the National Center for Environmental Health, and their work with tribal environmental health programs across the country.

2. LEVERAGING ADMINISTRATION PRIORITIES TO ADVANCE SUSTAINABLE, RESILIENT, INFRASTRUCTURE, DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, INDIAN AFFAIRS

- There is a new program within the department which is taking a holistic approach to environmental health and safety across tribal schools and facilities, including detention centers.
- There is funding in the 2022 budget specifically to address water quality concern at Bureau of Indian Education facilities.
- There are challenges related to tribal capacity, specifically the ability of tribes to take on and carry out new and existing infrastructure projects.

3. ARPA FUNDS UPDATE, IHS

- IHS has received \$167 million from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) which is in addition to the annual appropriations to help with their programs, including support for Housing Projects, water delivery projects, as well as funds that pay for Regular Projects off of the IHS Sanitation Deficiency System (SDS) list.
- There are challenges associated with appropriately assigning funds and spending them in a timely manner. The current average project duration is four years but this could increase if additional projects are funded without increases in staffing, either through direct hiring or contracting.
- As more funds become available, possibly through the passage of a congressional infrastructure bill, these challenges will only increase.

4. THRIITF UPDATES, HUD

- The Tribal Housing and Related Infrastructure Interagency Task Force (THRIITF) was founded in 2015 and has been recently reinvigorated with HUD as the lead agency. The working group now includes tribal representation.
- The goal of the task force is to better coordinate and streamline environmental review (i.e. NEPA) permitting processes for projects when multiple federal funding sources are used.
- Agencies involved include HUD (lead agency), CEQ, EPA, IHS, HHS, DOI, DOT, USDA, Commerce, DOE.

5. ENGAGEMENT FOR THE ITF WITH THE WHITE HOUSE COUNCIL NATIVE AMERICAN AFFAIRS (WHCNA) HEALTH COMMITTEE, WATER SUB-COMMITTEE, EPA

- There is significant overlap in subject matter and priorities between the WHCNA water sub-committee and this group.
- In April 2021 WHCNA was re-convened and re-invigorated following the founding in 2013. Members include EPA, State Department, DOI, SBA, DOT, DOE, IHS, BoR, BIA.
- There are 6 committees including the health committee which contains a water subcommittee chaired by IHS, with participants from EPA, BoR, BIA, VA, USDA, WH-DPC.
- *Action Item: ITF aims to present to the WHCNA on the history and structure of ITF and identify overlap between the two groups.*

6. MOU APPROVAL PROGRESS

- Approvals and signatures for the updated Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is ongoing.

Meeting Participants:

- Indian Health Service (IHS)
 - RADM Mark Calkins, Director, Division of Sanitation Facilities Construction (DSFC)
 - CAPT David Harvey, Deputy Director, DSFC
 - Ben Shuman Senior Engineer and NEPA Coordinator, DSFC

- Housing and Urban Development (HUD)
 - Gary Nemecek, Director, Grants Evaluation, Office of Native American Programs (ONAP)
 - Danielle Schopp, Program Environmental Clearance Officer (ONAP)

- Department of Interior: Indian Affairs and Bureau of Reclamation
 - Judith Wilson, Director, Office of Facilities, Property and Safety Management, Indian Affairs; Scott Sufficool, Public Health and Safety Manager, Office of Facilities, Property and Safety Management
 - Kelly Titensor, Native American Affairs Adviser, Bureau of Reclamation

- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
 - John Sarisky, Chief, Water, Food, and Environmental, Health Services Branch

- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)
 - Office of Ground Water and Drinking Water (OGWDW)
 - Yu-Ting Guilaran, Deputy Director
 - Protection Branch Tribal Team: CDR Samuel Russell, Team Leader and ITF Coordinator; Deborah Vacs Renwick, Sustainable Systems; Keyyana Blount, LCRR Rule Manager; Laura Montoya, Grants; Ed Moriarty
 - Office of Wastewater Management (OWM)
 - Wynne Miller, Deputy Director; Matthew Richardson, Tribal Lead, Sustainable Communities and Infrastructure Branch
 - Office of Land and Emergency Management (OLEM)
 - Carolyn Hoskinson, Deputy Director; and Charles Reddoor, National Tribal Programs Coordinator
 - Office of International and Tribal Affairs (OITA)
 - William Post, Program Analyst, AIEO
 - Office of Enforcement and Compliance Assurance (OECA)
 - Jonathan Binder, Senior Indian Program Manager