



In This Issue

Cover: A new tribal organization holds great promise to provide a unified voice for the tribes on matters of air quality management and policy on the national level.

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P. 3: National Congress of American Indians First Secretary, Joe Garcia, discusses some of the ways that the tribes can exert their influence in a variety of policy arenas.

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Tribes Create National Air Organization

After several years of preparation, meetings, brainstorming and extensive input and support from tribes across the country, the newly founded National Tribal Air Association (NTAA) is up and running and is positioning itself to offer an integrated voice for the tribes in air policy issues.

"The infrastructure of the organization is built, we have signed the bylaws, and we have an interim executive committee," says NTAA's facilitator, Joanna Mounce Stancil, who was hired by the National Tribal Environmental Council (NTEC) to help shepherd the organization into existence. NTEC staff conceived the idea of forming a tribal air organization in 1999 and has supported its development with funding from U.S. EPA. In 2000 at a meeting of the National Congress of American Indians (whose membership numbers more than 250 tribes), a resolution was adopted expressing support for the organization. Representatives of some two dozen tribes have been involved in helping shape NTAA's structure and mission. As of mid-November, four principle members had signed on, with many other tribes expressing interest. Stancil hopes and expects that in a year "we'll have 50 or 60 member tribes. But my goal is to have 100."

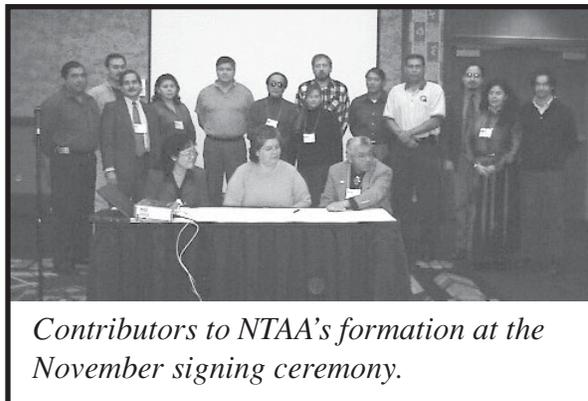
In October at a conference hosted by the Oneida Nation in Wisconsin, organizers struggled to develop their consensual vision of the NTAA—the culmination of years of work. "It was a very laborious process," Stancil says. "Since there's no system that fits all of Indian Country, we decided to find one representative from each EPA Region. Some of the regions have Regional Tribal Operations Committees, but not all. So people who came to the conference have their work cut out for them. They've agreed to go home to their regions and get someone approved [as representatives]."

Stancil says shaping an organization to serve as a single voice for tribes has required extensive compromise. "It hasn't been just sovereignty issues, but getting past the issue of why we need an organization like this. There's a point where you have to say, in order to move forward, we need to reach a consensus that this is how we'll do it – and if it doesn't work, we'll try something different. That's what courage is all about. There are issues like ozone, particulate matter designations – hot topics that will come back to impact Indian tribes, so we needed this air organization up and running."

To underscore that urgency, the fledgling organization is already working to provide input into U.S. EPA's upcoming Strategic Plan, that agency's periodic reshaping of focus and resource allocation. The Plan will seriously impact tribes involved in developing, fine-tuning and expanding their air management programs, as well as other tribes who may not even have an active air program. For example, schedules for Clean Air Act compliance can directly affect the pace and types of economic development that tribes pursue.

"We need this organization to address policy, legislation, funding," Stancil says. "Let's say, for instance, that there's never going to be a marked increase in funding for tribes in use for air management. How do we prioritize where the resources will go? You have to be proactive. There hasn't been a cohesive voice for that before. There are also pockets of excellence [within the tribes] that we're not hearing about, people who are doing things that we need to promote and maybe develop models from for other tribes to use."

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Contributors to NTAA's formation at the November signing ceremony.

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FROM THE DIRECTOR

ITEP recently marked its ten-year anniversary as a tribal environmental training and support organization with a three-day celebration at our base at Northern Arizona University in Flagstaff. As I participated in the festivities and spent time with the many people who came to celebrate with us, I was struck by how far we've all come. For ITEP it's been ten years of working with hundreds of tribes in their environmental management efforts. For the tribes, it's been a decade of unparalleled advancement in reclaiming authority to preserve and protect air, land and water in Indian Country.

When ITEP began its work, few tribes had developed environmental management programs, and delegation authority (so-called "treatment as a state" status) from the federal government was basically nonexistent. That the Tribal Authority Rule provides such authority in regard to air quality—ITEP's primary focus—is highly gratifying to us. We are both proud and humbled to have contributed to the development of tribal technical capacity that played some part in the creation of the Tribal Authority Rule.

Over the past decade, we've all learned much about ourselves as tribes, as people, and as citizens in a complex arrangement of jurisdictions and power relationships. It strikes me that there are two extremes we see in terms of tribal sovereignty efforts. On the one hand, there are tribes who feel that even the act of seeking delegation authority is an acknowledgement that true sovereignty is a pipe dream. These tend to be the more traditional tribes, many of whom signed treaties and (rightfully) believe that those documents codify and protect tribal sovereignty. On the other hand, there are tribes who have accepted the legitimacy of federal co-authority and have developed the management capacity to satisfy federal overseers. These tribes have worked tirelessly to create infrastructures



that meet the federal requirements for delegated authority—legal, administrative, judicial, technical, and all the rest.

Most tribes are probably somewhere in between these two extremes; they might

resent federal intrusiveness, but they also realize that as U.S. citizens, tribal members must accept federal primacy as an unyielding reality. Some of these tribes, in fact, may also feel strongly that Native sovereignty must be acknowledged, but they have put their fingers to the wind and know which way the present political breezes are blowing. As a result, some have chosen to slow their sovereignty efforts and instead just plow on, doing the work that needs to be done for their people.

I think an important lesson that these past ten years have taught us is that we live in a highly complex political world, one that requires careful deliberations in all our

actions. As the *Nevada v. Hicks* case so clearly demonstrates (see *Native Voices* Fall 2001), pursuing tribal sovereignty without the necessary legal infrastructure can backfire, and when it does, the results can harm all tribes. I believe we can and should assert ourselves as sovereign nations, but only after we've prepared ourselves

fully in terms of such tools as codes and regulations, science and data gathering, administrative and judicial infrastructure development. I believe that tribes should clearly understand that what is good for one tribe may not fit for another, and that before acting in the political realm, each should carefully ponder its socio-political situation—its culture, economic development, relationship with surrounding jurisdictions, checkerboard status, etc., as well as considering the real and forceful power of the private sector, whose interests may not coincide with ours. We will all come to claim our rightful place in the world—of that I have no doubt—but it may take a little longer than some would wish.

As for ITEP's last ten years: As I look back on our efforts, what really stands out for me is the fine work of our staff. Over the years they have demonstrated a level of professionalism and a strong, personal work ethic that reflects



Over 100 guests joined ITEP as we celebrated a decade of service to the tribes.

Institute for Tribal Environmental Professionals -Northern Arizona University-



ITEP Director
Virgil Masayesva

Program Manager
John Roanhorse

*Associate Professor &
AIAQTP Co-Principal Investigator*
Bridget Bero

Faculty Associate
Bill Auberle

*Assistant Professor &
Curriculum Coordinator*
Patricia Ellsworth

Research Specialist
Lydia Scheer

Quality Control Coordinator
Melinda Ronca-Battista

TAMS Co-Director
Annabelle Allison (ITEP)

TERC Manager
Sarah Kelly

EEOP Coordinator
Mansel Nelson

Administrative Assistant
Christy Nations

Editor
Dennis Wall

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the best of what I was taught as a child at Hopi. These qualities are clearly the main reason for our success as a technical training, education and support organization. I am proud of our efforts on behalf of the tribes, and I am delighted to work with such a great bunch of people.

With ten years of experience behind us, we at ITEP are more aware than ever of our responsibility to the tribes. Recently we have begun branching out into other environmental media. Although air quality will remain our prime focus, we are entering a time when we can help support tribal efforts to manage virtually all environmental media. We regard that role as a sacred trust, and we promise to work as hard as we can to provide the best training and support possible as we all begin another decade of our great adventure.



Joe Garcia: NCAI First Vice President Discusses Tribal Environmental Partnerships and Progress

Former San Juan Pueblo Governor Joe Garcia is First Vice President of the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI), the oldest and largest tribal government organization in the U.S. An electrical engineer with 26 years at Los Alamos National Laboratory in northern New Mexico, he also heads the laboratory's Tribal Relations Team, which addresses issues involving the federal facility and neighboring tribes on topics such as environmental cleanups, economic development, education and procurement.

Recently Mr. Garcia carried his support for the work of the newly formed National Tribal Air Association (NTAA) to NCAI, proposing both that a partnership be forged between the two organizations and that air quality be listed as an official focus of NCAI's Natural Resources Subcommittee. He was interviewed in mid-November by Dennis Wall, editor of *Native Voices*. The following are excerpts from that interview.

NV: Please describe NCAI and its present activities.

NCAI is a national organization that's been around since 1944. Our biggest charge is to protect sovereignty—that's the umbrella for everything we do. We address issues that affect Indian country, anything from healthcare to education to taxation to the environment, housing—the whole gamut. Right now there are between 250-260 tribes involved in the organization.

We have a sovereignty workgroup that covers topics like federal legislation, public relations work, Supreme Court issues, and the U.S. Congress. Since we've had a shift now in the Congress and it's gone more Republican, one of our big issues is that their leadership, for whatever reason, is keen on giving the states more power. What I think could happen is that a lot of traditional funding that tribes receive will be channeled down through the states, and they'll tell the states 'You and the tribes deal with this together.' That's the way a lot of things are now, but [if it increases],

it would be detrimental to tribal interests. So we're emphasizing to the federal government that it is obligated to deal with the tribes directly.

Economic development is another focus. We're looking at economic development as part of a lot of the solutions to various problems in Indian Country. If we become more actively involved in that, we can solve more problems.

NV: Why did you decide to propose adding air quality as an official topic of concern for NCAI's Natural Resources Subcommittee?

NCAI's main mission is to protect sovereignty. What are the constituents of sovereignty? It goes back to the land, the water, the air, the Indian people and their collective spirit. If we're protecting sovereignty, we can't just protect bits and pieces, we've got to protect it as a whole. Air is a part of who we are; if we don't have good air quality, what's going to happen to us? We won't survive.

I think my push is from a different perspective than some are taking. NCAI passed two initiatives a few years ago supporting this organization [that would become NTAA]. If we go back to those resolutions, they say, 'We shall collaborate, we shall partner, we shall share the resources.' So that's what I'm pushing. There are more than 50 tribal organizations in the U.S., and a lot of times we're struggling for the same funding. I think on the national level we haven't partnered up as effectively as we should. The big partnership is between the National Indian Gaming Association and NCAI, but what about the others? How can we more effectively use the resources we have? If we partner up, work together, we have a bigger pool of brainpower and we're not stepping all over each others' interests.

For example, the U.S. Congress has a lot of new people aboard, and we have to be sure we're sending the same message. If we don't we'll have confusion, and confusion at a high level leads to chaos.

NV: What can NTAA do apart from what NCAI is already doing?

NTAA brings us a new arena of awareness to the environmental side. Under NCAI's Natural Resource Subcommittee, we have listed the environment and land use. Well, protection of the environment means exactly that, but we have not had any air quality groups in there. So where is the technical knowledge when it comes to air protection? That's where the partnership comes into play. These guys are really knowledgeable, so they should be able to help to drive whatever national initiatives are best for tribes. I see NTAA as a direct partner with NCAI on air issues.

NV: What would you like to see NTAA accomplish in the next few years?

I think there needs to be a lot more awareness of air quality issues in Indian Country. I think there are ways to bring that about other than just through newsletters and the old approaches we've taken in the past. Depending on their awareness and understanding of various issues, tribal leaders will tend to concentrate on issues they feel comfortable with. Unfortunately, in most cases those are not technical issues. In many cases we need to work on the political side of an issue, but what about the technical side? If we don't have that understanding, the issue may go unaddressed. There's a level of knowledge that needs to be brought to the tribal leadership. If that's something that NTAA has in mind, I think it's something that NCAI can help them with.

We need a strategy to get that kind of information out. We've talked about how to increase that awareness, how to take a more proactive approach. One strategy we discussed is going out to public meetings and asking some real hard questions. For example, 'Do you know what you're breathing?' If you start listing contaminants in air, for

(see "Garcia" on Page 7)



AIAQTP Workshops

Feb. 11-14, 2003	The Clean Air Act & Permitting	Phoenix, AZ
Feb. 19-21, 2003	Continuous PM Monitoring	Las Vegas, NV
Mar. 4-7, 2003	Air Monitoring Data Management	Las Vegas, NV
Mar. 11-14, 2003	Introduction to AQ Management	Lawrence, KS
Mar. 18-20, 2003	Meteorological Stations	Las Vegas, NV
Mar. 25-27, 2003	Envir. Ed. for AQ Professionals	Flagstaff, AZ
Apr. 7-11, 2003	PM/PM2.5	Las Vegas, NV
Apr. 22-24, 2003	Devel. a Tribal Air Program	Salt Lake City, UT
May 5-9, 2003	Fundamentals of AQ Technology	Flagstaff, AZ

FY2003 Tribal Air Program Contacts/ Regional Tribal Coordinators

EPA Air Program Contacts

REGION 1

Ida McDonnell (Gagnon)
1 Congress St., Ste 1100 (CAP)
Boston MA 02114-2023
Ph: 617-918-1653 Fax: 617-918-1505
mcdonnell.ida@epa.gov

REGION 2

Mazeeda Khan
290 Broadway, 25th Fl.
New York NY 10007
Ph: 212-637-3715 Fax: 212-637-3901
khan.mazeeda@epa.gov

REGION 4

Darren Palmer (Title V Review)
61 Forsyth St. SW
Atlanta GA 30303
Ph: 404-562-9052 Fax: 404-562-9095
palmer.darren@epa.gov
Grace Danois (Title V Review) Ph: 404-562-9095
Allison Humphreys (Air Mon.) Ph: 404-562-9122

REGION 5

Ben Giwojna (Monitoring, Grants)
77 W. Jackson St. (AR-18J)
Chicago IL 60604
Ph: 312-886-0247 Fax: 312-886-0617
giwojna.benjamin@epa.gov
Dino Blathras (Permitting) Ph: 312-886-0671

REGION 6 Dick Thomas (OK & LA tribes)
Fountain Place, 1445 Ross Ave. (6PD-S)
Dallas TX 75202
Ph: 214-665-8528 Fax: 214-665-6762
thomas.richardm@epa.gov
Tony Talton (NM & TX tribes) Ph: 214-665-7205

REGION 7

Judy Robinson
901 N. Fifth St. (APDB/ARTD)
Kansas City KS 66101
Ph: 913-551-7825 Fax: 913-551-7065
robinson.judith@epa.gov
Lee Grooms (Monitoring) Ph: 913-551-7124

REGION 8

Monica Morales (Permitting, EI)
999 18th St. (8P-AR)
Denver CO 80202-2405
Ph: 303-312-6936 Fax: 303-312-6064
morales.monica@epa.gov
Bernadette Gonzalez (Grants) Ph: 303-312-6072

REGION 9

Gary Lance (N. & Central CA tribes)
75 Hawthorne St (AIR-8)
San Francisco CA 94105
Ph: 415-972-3992 Fax: 415-947-3579
lance.gary@epa.gov
Sara Bartholemew (S. CA tribes) Ph: 415-947-4100
Doug McDaniel (AZ tribes) Ph: 415-947-4106
Roy Ford (NV tribes) Ph: 415-972-3997

REGION 10

Mary Manous
1200 Sixth Ave. (OAQ-107)
Seattle WA 98101
Ph: 206-553-1059 Fax: 206-553-0110
manous.mary@epa.gov
Diana Boquist (Trib. Air Prog. Spec.) 206-553-1586

EPA Tribal Coordinators

Region 1

Jim Sappier
Ph: 617-918-1672 e-mail: sappier.james@epa.gov

Region 2

Christine Yost
Ph: 212-637-3564 e-mail: yost.christine@epa.gov

Region 4

Mark Robertson
Ph: 404-562-9639 e-mail: robertson.mark@epa.gov

Region 5

William Dew
Ph: 312-353-2087 e-mail: dew.william@epa.gov

Region 6

Donna Miller
Ph: 214-665-8093 e-mail: miller.donna@epa.gov

Region 7

Mark Hague
Ph: 913-551-7546 e-mail: hague.mark@epa.gov

Region 8

Sadie Hoskie
Ph: 303-312-6343 e-mail: hoskie.sadie@epa.gov

Region 9

Clancy Tenley
Ph: 415-972-3785 e-mail: tenley.clancy@epa.gov

Region 10

Sandy Johnson
Ph: 206-553-2887 e-mail: johnson.sandra@epa.gov

EEOP Offers New Environmental Workshop

Over the past several years, many tribal air quality professionals served by ITEP have expressed a need for assistance with education and outreach. They recognize that much of environmental protection involves the cooperation and action of individual community members. For example, to protect air quality from the impacts of burning household trash, a tribal air professional may need to convince hundreds of community members to change their historical methods and habits for disposing of trash. Key to successful involvement of community members is good education and outreach.

To assist them in their outreach and education efforts, the EEOP staff is developing an exciting new workshop, Environmental Education for Air Quality

Professionals, to be presented in Flagstaff, AZ, March 25-27, 2003. If the course is well received it will likely be offered regularly

each year. For more information, call Mansel A. Nelson at 928-523-1275/1496, or e-mail him at mansel.nelson@nau.edu. Information about the workshop will soon be available on the Web at <http://www.nau.edu/eeop/eeop/>.



Frederick Sherman (l.) working with students at a recent EOP educational activity.

New Staffer Hired at EEOP

We are pleased to announce the selection of Frederick Sherman as an instructor for EEOP. Working with ITEP for over two years as a student staff member, Fred has made significant contributions to the program. Fred is a Navajo tribal member from the Navajo Mountain area of Navajo Nation. You can call Fred at 928-523-8864/1496 or contact him by e-mail at Frederick.Sherman@nau.edu.

UREO Funding Extended

The EPA Office of Air and Radiation (OAR), Radiation Protection Division, Washington D.C. Office, has continued funding of the Uranium and Radiation Education Outreach (UREO) project for an additional two years. The expanded UREO project will offer more outreach to tribal communities at the national level. Previously, the UREO project provided uranium/radiation education only to the Navajo Nation.

For the past two years the UREO project has focused on providing professional development workshops for teachers, with a problem-based learning & community-based education approach. Now the focus is to develop curriculum projects that integrate culturally appropriate and balanced environmental information for use in the classroom. This curriculum will be distributed nationally through teacher workshops. For more information, contact Mansel A. Nelson, EEOP Program Coordinator, by e-mail at Mansel.Nelson@nau.edu, or 928-523-1496 / 8864. You can also visit the UREO website at <http://www.nau.edu/eeop/ureo/>.



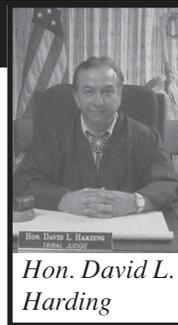
Tribal Judge Discusses Indian Law Issues

As the tribes advance in their legal expertise and clout, says Hoopa Valley Tribal Judge Pro Tem Hon. David L. Harding, so too do their responsibilities. Harding, who is the presiding judge for the Coeur d' Alene tribe in Idaho, was affirmed by the U.S. Supreme Court in March 2002 for an opinion he wrote in 1996 concerning the White Deerskin Dance Trail on the Hoopa Valley Reservation in California. The case involved a fee-land owner within reservation boundaries whose logging near the tribal sacred site drew legal action. The case

resulted in a U.S. Supreme Court decision affirming that the Hoopa Tribe has jurisdiction over non-Indian fee land owners when their actions threaten on-reservation religious sites.

Judge Harding says that even given the overwhelming facts in the tribe's favor it was still questionable whether they would prevail. The relationship between tribal courts and those of society at large, he says, are complex and require careful thought whenever legal action is contemplated. The following are excerpts from a recent conversation with Judge Harding and the editor of *Native Voices*.

NV: How would you describe the progress tribes have made in the legal world in the past couple of



Hon. David L. Harding

decades? I think in the last two decades or so we have progressed tremendously. In 1979 when I went to law school, there were probably only about 30 Indian attorneys in the

whole country. There were very few tribal courts that were as sophisticated as they are now, and if a tribe wanted federal recognition, we had to go to our Congressman, who had to introduce a bill (BIA has their own in-house way of doing that now). The progress we've made in defining our legal rights and fighting our legal battles is absolutely tremendous. **NV:** What should tribes consider when they're contemplating legal action outside tribal courts? I think what we have to consider is: What are the enabling documents [that serve as the



A photograph taken early this century of Hoopa tribal members in Brush Dance garb. (photo courtesy of J. Biondini)

See "Harding" on page 6



Protecting Tribal Waters: ITEP Training and Support in Region 8

The tribes in EPA Region 8, says Deb Madison, Environmental manager for the Fort Peck Tribes in Montana, “have always had a water quality training initiative, and they’ve always felt that water quality training is important. It’s been a matter of prioritizing tribal needs.”

With a recent grant from US EPA, ITEP is now addressing that need with the development of a comprehensive water quality training

program for the region’s 29 tribes (Region 8 includes Montana, Wyoming, Utah, Colorado, North Dakota and South Dakota).

A needs assessment is the first step in the training development process.

That assessment is presently underway via an extensive survey of tribes in the region. Training needs will be diverse. Tribes in Wyoming, Montana, and North and South Dakota reside within the Missouri Basin, a broad drainage to the Missouri River; Colorado and Utah tribes face a variety of concerns associ-

ated with surface water in a more arid part of the region. Potential sources of pollution throughout the region include municipalities, agriculture, “hydromodification” (dams and other water-control facilities), mining waste, non-point sources such as septic tanks, and development projects on various reservations. “We also have some spectacularly pristine areas of concern,” Madison says, “such as Wind River

and Blackfeet land—high quality wild areas that should be protected.”

ITEP’s Region 8 training and support program will be designed based on tribal input and will involve general training in water quality management skills, rather than addressing specific issues. Training

topics will include: basics of water monitoring, various monitoring methods and designs, quality control, handling of samples, habitat assessment, and an examination of various water contaminants. Conceivably, radiation contamination of water in the vicinity of some Utah tribes could be a topic to be covered. “It will be up to the tribes to

decide what they need,” Madison says.

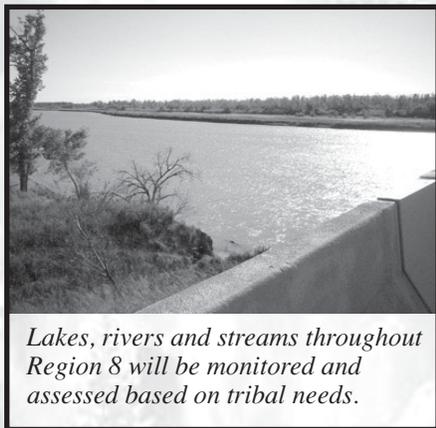
Contractors have provided training to regional tribes in the past, but Madison says ITEP is the ideal partner for this project because of its established training and support protocol, which strongly emphasizes the tribal perspective. “With ITEP courses we’ll have training continuity and the continuous improvement that ITEP always puts into its courses. And there’s always a strong effort to bring in tribal environmental

professionals working in the field to serve as instructors. Also, I think ITEP does the best job by far in emphasizing cultural concerns.”

The needs assessment should be completed by January. With the assessment in hand, ITEP will begin examining tribal input and designing curricula. For more information, contact Deb Madison (e-mail 2horses@nemontel.net) or ITEP’s Justin Ramsey at justin.ramsey@nau.edu.



EMAP sampling on the Fort Peck Reservation in Montana.



Lakes, rivers and streams throughout Region 8 will be monitored and assessed based on tribal needs.

Harding (cont. from page 5)

basis for tribal sovereignty]? How did they originate? Executive order? Treaty? An act of Congress? We need to know what authority we have before we say we have sovereign authority to do certain things. It doesn’t matter how big your sovereign is. What matters is the quality of the sovereign with which you govern, and that depends on the enabling legislation that allows you that authority.

NV: Can you rank the strengths of the various enabling authorities? That’s hard to say, because a lot of treaties have been broken, executive orders have been misinterpreted or reinterpreted, Congress has changed legislation. So I don’t think you can rank them. I can say that we need to help tribes educate themselves as to [how they obtained] their sovereign authority, and how they can be more certain that when they put the right foot down the left foot is going to fall, too.

NV: Once tribes have examined the status of their sovereign authority, what else can they do to firm up their legal positions? It’s very important to continually update our constitutions and bylaws. Since the Indian Reorganization Act, BIA constantly used boilerplate constitutions—they’d take, say, the Apache constitution, and just plug in another tribe’s name. So in order to protect the quality of their sovereign, tribes need to go through their own documents and make sure they’re updated and functional.

NV: The *Bugenig v. Hoopa Valley Tribe* case turned out well, but the *Nevada v. Hicks* judgment wasn’t so good for the tribes. What else should tribes consider when contemplating legal action that could impact their interests and those of other tribes? The facts you go to court with are tremendously important. It’s difficult to say how any decision will come down, but you should make sure the facts support your claim and that your enabling legislation will protect you.

Negative impacts on other tribes are always a consideration. If your case looks weak, if your chances of prevailing aren’t great, you may want to hold off until you have a better set of facts. Our progress in fighting our battles has been great, but the battles will continue to rage. Knowing from whence your sovereign came and under what authority can help you better predict whether you’re going to pick a legal battle or stay out of one.



example dust particles in windy country, and you relate health information on that, it brings a different level of awareness.

NV: As head of the Tribal Relations Team with Los Alamos National Lab, and as Governor of San Juan Pueblo, what have been some of the environmental issues you've addressed?

The major issues with the Lab have been environmental, involving cleanups and monitoring toxic waste in some of the canyons [below the Lab]. There are numerous sites like that throughout Department of Energy property, which borders four Pueblos: Jemez, Cochiti, San Ildefonso, and Santa Clara. The Lab, DOE, and the Pueblos have mutual agreements to work on environmental issues and other issues.

When I was Governor of San Juan [1995 and 1997], we had the Cerro Grande Fire a few years ago [a major wildfire in northern New Mexico that burned scores of Los Alamos homes and thousands of acres of forest]. At first we thought the air wasn't really being affected in the direction of San Juan Pueblo. Then we started seeing [pollution] in the air, and we found that people were being hurt by it. A PM monitor had been set up awhile back and has been running since, in partnership with Los Alamos National Laboratory. This was used to verify the level of pollutants in the air. It does measurements, then sends the data by uplink to a satellite which sends it down to Lab computers, and from our site we have access to their computers. I think it's important to have air monitoring throughout Indian Country.

NV: Overall, what do you think Native Americans can best do to protect their environments?

The question is always: How can we more effectively use the resources that we have? One big dilemma is that people want to see immediate change and progress. I've been personally battling that, because it's like a tree, you can't expect to plant it and have fruits on it tomorrow morning. You've got to keep working at it. And I think people are slowly coming around to that realization. 

ITEP To Offer Alaska-Specific Air Management Support

Alaskan Native environmental professionals have attended numerous ITEP-sponsored air-management workshops over the past few years. Although they've learned important information and technical skills in those courses, they've also expressed their frustration that Alaska's unique geographic and political systems are not adequately reflected in the curricula, which has generally been geared to the needs of tribes in the lower 48 states.

ITEP has heard them and will soon develop course work specifically attuned to the needs of Alaska Natives. With a five-year grant from EPA Region 10 (covering Alaska, Washington, Oregon and Idaho), ITEP is developing Alaska-specific air training workshops based on input from Alaska Natives and others familiar with the state's unique concerns.

Annabelle Allison, co-director of the Tribal Air Monitoring and Support (TAMS) Center, says requests from tribal air professionals for Alaska-specific workshops have increased as Alaskan tribes grow more active in pursuing air-management expertise. "Often in their comments during course evaluations, they've told us the courses are really good but they just don't meet their needs," she says. "The beauty of ITEP is that we have the workshop structure in place, and we can apply that structure to just about any issue, any environmental media. So it's just a matter of developing the specific topics of concern to Alaska Natives."

Among the concerns of Alaska Natives are intergovernmental issues and the state's unique land-boundary structure, as well as general differences in the way air becomes polluted in often-remote Native villages. "They have a lot of indoor air issues," Allison says, "and there are a lot of solid-waste and landfill-burning issues. They also have mobile sources such as snowmobiles, all-terrain vehicles and even airplanes, which is how many people get around up there. So pollution sources can be urban, industrial, and very local in nature."

During the first year of the grant period, ITEP will conduct a series of roundtable discussions with Alaskan tribal members, officials from the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation, and possibly

nonprofit agencies. "We just want to hear from them what their issues are and what they'd like to see in the workshops," says Allison. "After the assessments are completed, the ITEP curriculum coordinator will sit down with all the information and create some course work." Likely workshops for the first year include an introduction to Alaskan air quality management, a technically oriented course, and possibly a MiniVol air monitoring workshop. During the later years of the grant period, additional courses will be developed, for a total of five workshops.

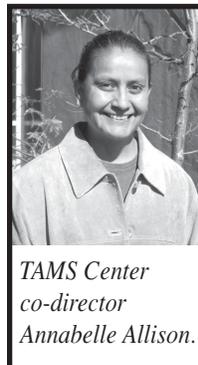
The monitoring course could result from another component of ITEP's new Alaskan air initiative. EPA Region 10 has set aside 31 MiniVol monitors (small, portable monitors used to assess general particulate matter levels in specific areas), to be stored and refurbished at the TAMS Center for use by the region and tribes throughout the nation. Sixteen of those monitors will be reserved for Region 10 tribes, and some of those will likely go to Alaskan tribes in late 2003 or early 2004. Allison says the upcoming roundtable discussions will help clarify Alaskan tribal interest in air monitoring, and decisions on the deployment of monitors will be made based on those and other discussions.

Tribes who wish to monitor their airsheds but lack the technical expertise will be assisted either through Alaska-specific monitoring coursework or other support.

Allison says monitoring data can be very helpful to Alaskan villagers—if they know from the start how they plan to use that information. "For example, if the issue is open-barrel burning, they need to be ready to change local practices, come up with ordinances or restrict burning to certain days. Monitoring data can be very helpful in persuading villagers that a problem exists.

"The overall idea," says Allison, "is to find out what Alaskan Natives need and then develop ways to help them build the capacity to achieve their goals."

For more information, contact Annabelle at Annabelle.Allison@nau.edu.



TAMS Center
co-director
Annabelle Allison.



ITEP Develops Tribal Wastewater Training Center



Wastewater facility at Fort McDowell Reservation, AZ. Photo by John Mead.

For decades, tribal wastewater infrastructure has consisted mainly of sewage lagoons – large, often-featureless ponds where waste is allowed to flow and break down. The system works well enough if bacteria in the lagoon are allowed to flourish and the system is not overloaded. However, the lagoon system requires extensive acreage, can emit unpleasant odors, and is often anything but pleasing to the eye.

For those reasons, some tribes are choosing to make the switch to smaller, more efficient systems that require little space and are easily hidden behind fences and other barriers. Many of those setups are known as "aerobic package systems," pre-designed systems of basins, pumps and pipes that can treat several thousand gallons of wastewater each day. With the rise of Indian casinos, such systems find a ready market – they're easy to hide from vacationing visitors and can handle relatively large amounts of waste.

Aerobic package systems, however, require greater expertise than lagoons, posing challenges for many tribes. Too often, vendors who sell such systems to tribes provide only limited training and offer little ongoing support. Compounding the problem, tribal wastewater-system managers often find that their expertise commands better pay at off-reservation facilities, so many pursue jobs at those facilities. The high staff turnover that results can leave tribal systems rudderless for extended periods.

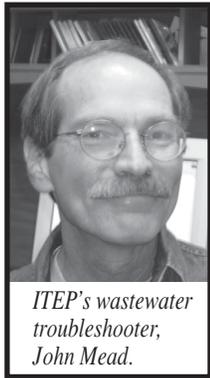
To address the need for a permanent tribal wastewater training infrastructure, ITEP is now assessing wastewater support needs in

Indian Country. The Tribal Wastewater Training Center, now in development, is being established in accordance with training for operation and maintenance of wastewater systems as set forth in 104(g) of the Clean Water Act.

Justin Ramsey, ITEP's recently hired project director, says "The tribes are well aware of the air quality work that ITEP has been doing for so long, and they've been clamoring for us to provide the same sort of training in water quality. We're looking at developing three courses right now: something like *Fundamentals of Wastewater Collection and Treatment*; *Hydraulics*, which will cover topics like the sizing of pumps and pipes; and *Wastewater System Computations*. We won't be doing training yet on specific wastewater systems, but in the future we'll probably have a *Treatment Systems Technology* workshop, too."

Longtime wastewater manager and consultant John Mead has joined the ITEP staff to help develop the new workshops and to serve as an onsite troubleshooter, traveling throughout Indian Country assisting tribes with training and technical support. Mead spent 16 years managing a wastewater facility in Denver, Colorado, and is state-accredited in various aspects of water treatment technology. He sees the new ITEP workshops as avenues not only for training tribal wastewater professionals but as "a unique opportunity to instill passion in participants that this profession can go beyond being just a job for those who understand the importance of having proficiency in helping to protect their communities and environments." Mead is presently traveling throughout Indian Country studying existing tribal wastewater systems and soliciting input from tribal experts on the kinds of support that ITEP can best provide.

For more information, contact Justin Ramsey by e-mail at justin.ramsey@nau.edu, or John Mead at john.mead@nau.edu.



ITEP's wastewater troubleshooter, John Mead.

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<http://www4.nau.edu/itep>
Phone: (928) 523-7792 Fax: 928-523-1266
Flagstaff, AZ 86011-5004
PO Box 15004
Institute for Tribal Environmental Professionals

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