

New Issues for August 2012

REGIONAL TRIBAL OPERATIONS COMMITTEE

8/27/12

Draft: Additional issues may be added based on discussion at the Tribal Caucus and work group meetings.

	REQUESTED BY (Date)	TASK	WHO (Tribe/EPA)	WHEN (update or completion)	STATUS
1	So. California <i>Issue from the May RTOC.</i>	What is the status on funding the certified Tribal labs for BMI sampling?	Christopher Chen		On June 28, the Benthic Macro-Invertebrate laboratory conference interested tribes to discuss methods for EPA to further support (see on conference call notes). Two requests for sessions at the Annual bioassessments were submitted. We also created a BMI work group discussing the topic further (see attached notes).
<p>1. Clarify Action item # 1 when was the conference call held? Are there any notes? If certification is completed what is the capacity of the labs and what for?</p>					
3	Arizona Tribes <i>Issue from the May RTOC.</i>	The tribes would like funding to develop credentialed inspectors. Current funding is going to contractors to support this effort, but funding directly to tribes and/or the Inter-Tribal Council of Arizona should be considered.	Steven Linder, EPA		<p>Update from May RTOC on UST</p> <p>Region 9 is currently credentialed inspectors in Navajo Nation covers Nevada tribes implemented by the Washoe Tribe. Region 9 Tank Program (USTP) is having discussions with Inter-Tribal Council formation of a coalition of Arizona Tribes who would seek federal funding.</p> <p>Region 9 encourages the formation of further inspection coalition facilities or more. Region 9 will negotiate with the Office of UST to obtain funding for support of federal credentialed inspectors and agreements.</p> <p>The USTP has awarded an <u>FY13 UST Cooperative Agreement to the Protection Coalition (NAEPC) for \$30,000</u> to hire and train an</p>

			Angela Barranco, EPA	<p>inspections, and provide education and outreach to participants. The USTPO will obtain a US EPA federal credential for this NAEP. 10 tribes that have signed a resolution with NAEPC for this project to participate in the future. For further information contact S...</p> <p>A follow up request to Action Item #3 submitted in August</p> <p>Request that an inspectors training be offered across all projects</p> <p>There are several opportunities for inspector training through the Training Institute (NETI), which includes inspector training for multimedia training. The Monthly Tribal Newsletter includes training scheduled. There may be opportunities to pursue / develop multimedia training once the Enforcement Division is up and running. This is a priority. In the meantime, the regional Enforcement Division will ask the RTOC to identify and address training needs for tribal inspectors and other tribal law enforcement authorities through the RTOC. It would also be helpful to know if there are specific programs that are part of a multimedia training (to address specific environmental</p>
4	So. California	On the SB14b measure for Water Program Guidance, when EPA identifies which Tribes have pristine water will funding be cut or limited to them?	Audrey Johnson, EPA	<p>SP-14b is a voluntary measure in which tribes can assist EPA with water quality in Indian Country. Region 9 will work with tribal water programs that are meeting tribal uses, with no degradation of related parameters. Because this is a voluntary measure, a tribal program gets to decide if EPA is meeting this measure. Neither funding or grant performance is required for a measure as it is not a requirement through statute or regulatory programs.</p>

5	N. California	Tsunami debris on our coastline. How can EPA help re: response and cleanup?	John Kennedy, EPA		See Attachment (below)
6					
7					
8					
9					

Action item # 5 response: Marine debris attributed to the tsunami that hit Japan last year has been washing ashore along the western coast of the US and British Columbia. Most of the debris thus far has landed on the coast north of California, but some items have begun washing ashore in CA. It is important to remember that marine debris on our coast is an everyday problem, and it washes ashore routinely from Pacific nations and islands, including those from Asia.. Very few of the recent sightings have been verified as tsunami debris since serial numbers or other unique markings are typically needed to trace items back to the Japan tsunami. However, the number of sightings is increasing. Perhaps you are noticing an increase in debris washing ashore already in some of your areas.

EPA Region 9 is conducting this outreach to point you to information and resources that you may find helpful should you encounter potential tsunami debris, especially any unusual debris (unusual debris might include boats, gas cylinders, drums, structures, etc.). Over the past few months coastal states (CA, OR, WA, AK, HI), British Columbia, and federal agencies have worked to develop protocols and guidelines for response actions and compile information that may be useful. The protocols, guidelines and information are posted on a couple of primary websites:

1. An inter agency Joint Information Center (JIC) website has been set up as an "all in one place" resource center. The site contains:
 - Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) on tsunami debris
 - Guidelines for identifying and assessing debris, especially debris that may be contaminated - if debris is identified as having oil or hazardous materials, tribes can call the National Response Center at: 1-800-424-8802 or 202-267-2675
 - Vessel ID information - there are thousands of boats that washed away that are still unaccounted for
 - Media reports, photos, and video resources
 - Latest updates on debris sightings and activities
 - Links to other related resources.

<http://disasterdebris.wordpress.com/>

2. The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Japan Tsunami Marine Debris website is the primary place to report debris sightings. It also has information on marine debris modeling, monitoring, and handling, NOAA is coordinating the overall tsunami debris effort.

<http://marinedebris.noaa.gov/tsunamidebris/monitoring.html>

We recognize that disposal of marine debris, except perhaps in small amounts, can potentially pose a logistical and financial challenge to states, local entities, and tribes. EPA is aware of two programs that are available with resources to assist tribes with marine debris removal. These are the NOAA community based Marine Habitat Restoration program and the CA Coastal Commission "Adopt a Beach" program.

Under its Marine Habitat Restoration Program, NOAA offers competitive grants to a number of entities, including tribes, for debris removal projects. This program does not offer the grants for preparedness activities, but rather for removal of existing debris. The application deadline for 2013 grants is November 1, 2012 (same deadline each year). See their website at:

<http://www07.grants.gov/search/search.do;jsessionid=HNWHQ1yf6N8TKdvP8wgJ9Vhn4jW19VSvjpxKC7vZGr2zhVbNxxXq!-365260859?oppld=191353&mode=VIEW>

For more information, contact:

Tom Barry
NOAA Restoration Program
301.427.8653
tom.barry@noaa.gov

The CA Coastal Commission (CCC) "Adopt a Beach" program is made up of organized, local volunteer groups who adopt a beach and remove debris several times a year. This program may expand if large amounts of marine debris impact the shoreline. According to the CCC, Tribes are invited to partner with the Adopt a Beach program and receive assistance with beach clean up. Visit their website at :

<http://www.coastal.ca.gov/publiced/pendx.html>

For more information, contact:

Eben Schwartz
CA Coastal Commission
415.904.5210
eschwartz@coastal.ca.gov

Finally, we are working at the national level to find solutions for the costs associated with tsunami debris to States and Tribes and will update you as this situation changes.