

## DRINKING WATER / WASTEWATER WORKGROUP REPORT

**Prepared by:** Linda Reeves, EPA Lead; Tom Keegan, Tribal Lead; Marta Burg, RTOC Legal Advisor

**Date Prepared:** January 31, 2011

**GOAL:** The Drinking Water / Wastewater Workgroup's goal is to improve tribal access to drinking water and wastewater sanitation through regional and national efforts, and interagency and collaborative efforts to address both physical infrastructure needs and asset protection activities, including maintaining and increasing funding.

### PRIORITIES:

#### Infrastructure Funding

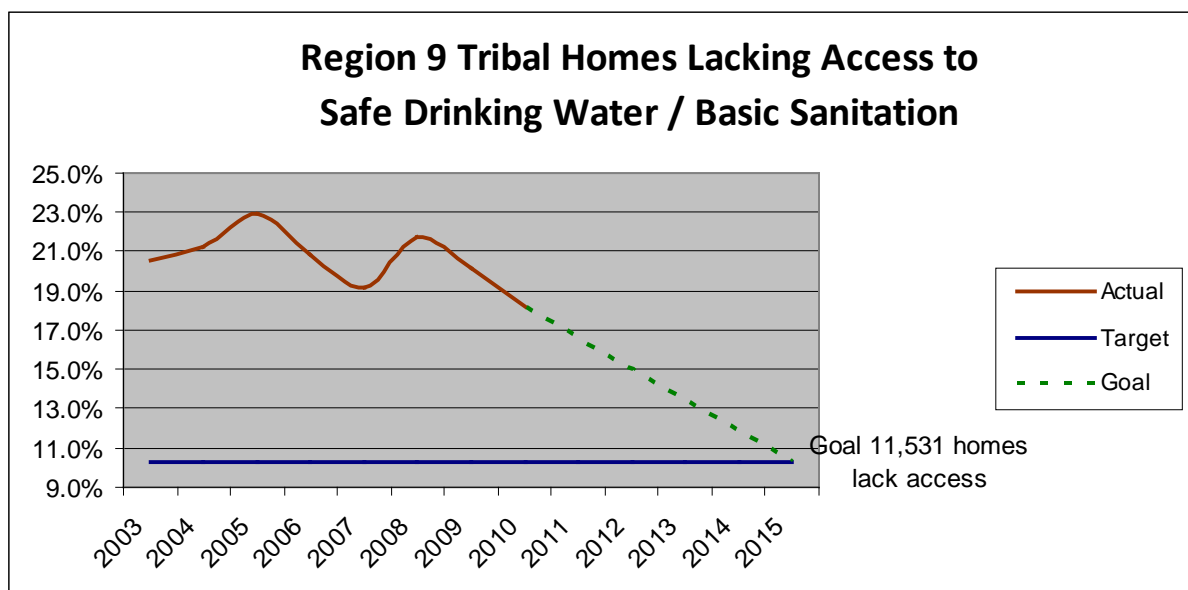
##### 1. American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) Funding

- 13 drinking water projects: 4 complete/substantially complete, 8 under construction  
Contact: Sara Ziff (415) 972-3536
- 47 clean water projects: 32 under construction  
Contact: Erskine Benjamin (415) 972-3561

#### Interagency Coordination

##### 2. Participate in the National Infrastructure Task Force and Access Subgroup to achieve the Goal to Increase Tribal Access to Safe Water by 50% by 2015

Status: Work continues under the Access Implementation Workgroups. In FY 10, the percent of tribal homes lacking access decreased both regionally and nationally.



Contact: Marta Burg (323) 258-1009; Linda Reeves (415) 972-3445

3. Lead Regional Interagency Drinking Water / Wastewater Workgroup  
Status: An interagency meeting was held 10/21/10 at the Annual Tribal Environmental Conference in San Francisco, including action items to implement new collaborative projects, gather data for a tribal O&M study, and create a tribal resource clearinghouse. A Sustainable Infrastructure Resource Fair is planned for 2/7; and a California Technical Assistance coordination meeting will occur 2/8.  
Contact: Linda Reeves, Tom Keegan (707) 857-1810 x117, Marta Burg
4. Implement Tribal Water Collaborative Projects – see attached status report  
Contact: Linda Reeves

### **Operation and Maintenance**

5. Create Tribal Operation and Maintenance Study (national or regional)  
Need: The Access Implementation Plan recommends a tribal Operation and Maintenance study. The study could identify tribal operation and maintenance costs per home, as compared with like sized non-tribal systems, and include highlights of specific tribal water systems challenges, like Kashia. The study could also highlight successful tribal operation and maintenance programs, such as those that do full cost pricing and variable rate billing.  
Next steps: Interested tribes could contribute data for inclusion in an O&M Study. Rob Roy, Nina Hapner and Ron Sundberg will see if tribes are interested in submitting information for the study.
6. Develop programs to lower tribal sampling and analysis costs through bulk discounts at labs and achieve greater compliance with the Safe Drinking Water Act
  - ITCA Monitoring Assistance Program  
Status: ITCA has partnered with the Yavapai Apache Tribe to pilot a Monitoring Assistance Program.  
Contact: Patrick McMullen ITCA (602) 258-4822, Kevin Ryan (415) 972-3806
  - California Rural Water Association (CA RWA) Preferred Provider Program  
Status: CA RWA created a preferred provider program for its members which offers numerous discounted services, including laboratory analytical services at an average 20% discount (see [calruralwater.org](http://calruralwater.org)).  
Contact: Dustin Hardwick CA Rural Water Association (800) 833-0322
7. Resource Clearinghouse  
Need: Tribes can help each other by sharing surplus equipment/infrastructure/resources through a clearinghouse which will include the categories the retired equipment can be used for, recognizing that federal design specifications may limit use of clearinghouse equipment. The Redwood Water Resources Network has something similar (<http://rwrn.org/equipment/equipment.html>) and the Native American Water Master Association may be interested.  
Next step: Tom Keegan will work with Ron Sundberg and Lee Schegg of RCAC.  
Contact: Tom Keegan

8. Support tribal asset protection projects

Status: Asset protection is an eligible GAP task. Since FY 07, GAP has provided a total of \$806K of GAP funds for asset protection activities benefits dozens of tribes.

Contact: Destinee Cooper, 415-972-3790

9. Change California regulations to ensure that tribal wastewater operators can use their experience working at tribal facilities to obtain California wastewater operator certification

Status: The Office of Operator Certification (OOC) is in the process of amending the Operator Certification Regulations, Sections 3670-3719.19, Chapter 26, Title 23, of the California Code of Regulations.

Proposed Timeline

August 2011 - public notice

October 2011 - comment period ends

Fall 2011 - regulations take effect

Announcements regarding the regulation amendments will be posted on the OOC website [http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water\\_issues/programs/operator\\_certification/index.shtml](http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/operator_certification/index.shtml) and email notifications sent to OOC mailing list. To receive OOC announcements, please subscribe to “Wastewater Operator Certification” email list at:

[http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/resources/email\\_subscriptions/swrcb\\_subscribe.shtml](http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/resources/email_subscriptions/swrcb_subscribe.shtml).

Contact: Tom Keegan, Linda Reeves

**Drinking Water Needs Survey**

10. Drinking Water Infrastructure Needs Survey

The Safe Drinking Water Act requires the USEPA, in consultation with the Indian Health Service (IHS) and Indian tribes, to prepare surveys and assess the needs of drinking water systems serving American Indians and Alaska Native Villages. The American Indian and Alaska Native Village Drinking Water Infrastructure Needs Survey (DWINS) was last conducted in 1999. Results from the survey are used in conjunction with IHS’s Sanitation Deficiency System (SDS) list to determine annual USEPA regional funding allotments for the Drinking Water Tribal Set-Aside program. See attached for more information, including a list of the systems selected for the survey.

Contact: Sara Ziff

Workgroup Transparency

Visit the Workgroup website (blog):

<http://rtocwaterworkgroup.blogspot.com/>

Username: RTOCwaterworkgroup

Password: waterworkgroup

Contact: Linda Reeves

## **Status of Tribal Water Collaborative Projects and Needs - January 2011**

### **Projects Ongoing**

#### Big Valley Drinking Water and Wastewater

Need: Numerous trailers lack access to drinking water.

Status: IHS provided \$120,000 of ARRA funds for a feasibility study to address the need. IHS is developing Scope of Work for feasibility study. Contact: Sarah Ryan, Big Valley; Dave Mazorra, IHS (916-930-3960, x345)

#### Hopi Drinking Water Supply for First and Second Mesa

Need: EPA is providing DWTSA funds for a new water source to address arsenic needs in First and Second Mesa. Arsenic treatment options are not feasible due to the presence of vanadium in the water supply which interferes with many of the arsenic treatment. The entire project will cost \$15-20M, requiring a phased approach with the participation of many agencies.

Status: EPA awarded Phase 1 for a well which will be drilled in 2011. EPA is also considering a proposal for Phase 2 of the project. USDA is interested in considering an application for funding.

Contact: Bessie Lee, EPA (415-972-3776)

#### Kashia Operation and Maintenance

Need: High operational costs for few homes, complex treatment plant, remote location, dependence on one operator, O&M manual lacks needed detail.

Next steps: EPA, IHS and RCAC are working with the tribe to evaluate how best to address needs.

#### Navajo Feasibility Study for Homes Lacking Access

Need: A feasibility study is needed to evaluate alternatives to serve homes lacking access.

Status: EPA funded a Navajo Water Hauling Feasibility Study and Pilot Program through the Navajo Nation Department of Water Resources (DWR). Navajo Nation EPA developed draft water hauling guidelines.

Contact: Najam Tariq, Navajo

#### Navajo Wastewater Program

Need: Navajo is developing a wastewater program and seeks funding and sample ordinances to assist in drafting wastewater regulations and minimum design standards.

Status: Aspects of developing a wastewater program are eligible for EPA 106, GAP and Source Water Protection funds. Navajo included wastewater related activities in its application for FY10 Source Protection funds. Sample tribal ordinances are available at: <http://www.narf.org/nill/triballaw/index.htm>.

Contact: Yolanda Barney, Navajo

#### Tohono O'odham Modular Bathrooms

Need: Funds are needed to construct modular bathrooms for 300 homes that cannot be connected to existing public water systems because they lack indoor plumbing.

Status: USDA invited the Tohono O'odham Utility Authority (TOUA) to apply for funds for the first phase of the project which will allow for the construction of modular bathroom for 100 homes. TOUA also applied for State ARRA funds.

Contact: David Saddler, TOUA; Linda Reeves, EPA

#### Washoe Leaking Fixtures

Need: Elders need help fixing leaking faucets and toilets. San Diego Gas and Electric provided tribes with assistance to fix similar problems.

Next steps: Janice Waddell of USDA Rural Development will follow up with Chad Malone of the Washoe Tribe.