

Tribal Pesticide Program Council Executive Committee
Monthly Conference Call
05/20/26
Call Notes – Final

Join by Zoom: <https://nau.zoom.us/j/89303644703>
or phone: 312-626-6799 or 888-788-0099 (toll free)
Meeting ID: 893 0364 4703
Password: 186136

Roll call:

Tribes (15)

- Amanda Holm, White Earth Nation
- Camilo Perez, Quechan Indian Tribe
- Chris Ollie, Mandan, Hidatsa and Arikara Nation
- Erica Taylor, Cherokee Nation
- James Williams, Muscogee Nation
- Jefferson Biakeddy, Navajo Nation
- Jessica Raspitha, St. Regis Mohawk Tribe
- Nina Hapner, Kashia Band of Pomo Indians
- Olivia Pospisil, Ponca Tribe of Nebraska
- Renee Keezer, White Earth Nation
- Sarah Deshazer, Spokane Tribe of Indians
- Tacy Jensen, Gila River Indian Community
- Terry Hill, San Carlos Apache Tribe
- Theodore Puetz, Ak-Chin Indian Community
- Tyler Jacobs, St. Regis Mohawk Tribe

Tribal Organizations (2)

- Africa Dorame-Avalos, Inter Tribal Council of Arizona
- Diania Caudell, California Indian Basketweavers Association

EPA (3)

- Linsey Walsh, EPA/OPP
- Emma Cross, EPA/OECA
- Susan Morales, EPA/R9

Other (2)

- Nikki Cooley, Institute for Tribal Environmental Professionals
- Mark Daniels, Institute for Tribal Environmental Professionals

Reported in advance as absent (1)

- Eric Gjevre, Coeur d'Alene Indian Tribe

1. Tribal Caucus

2. Welcome/Introductions

Nina Hapner, Kashia Band of Pomo Indians facilitated the roll call

3. EPA Updates

Linsey Walsh, EPA/OPP noted that EPA just released their draft fungicide strategy to comply with the Endangered Species Act, which is open for comment until June 29th. Mark Daniels, ITEP said that the TPPC's Policy Workgroup will be looking at this and submitting comments. Renee Keezer, White Earth Nation mentioned that there was an informational webinar on the fungicide strategy; Linsey noted the webinar had just occurred prior to the call, and was recorded if people missed it. She also said she'd get the materials to the group.

Emma Cross, EPA/OECA thanked the TPPC members who will be presenting at EPA's upcoming National Pesticide Managers Meeting in June, and noted that they will have a session on how Tribes get funding for pesticide programs through cooperative agreements, based on interest from their regional staff.

Nina mentioned that she was in Alaska recently and learned that some of the remote villages there are having problems with bedbugs and aren't able to use the previous advice from EPA on how to control them due to warming temperatures (making cold treatment difficult) and limited/expensive energy supplies to run dryers (for heat treatment). She asked if EPA is currently doing any outreach to those communities. Linsey said Region 10 had previously done a handful of project on bedbugs with Alaska Native Villages, and messaged her colleague at the region to see if they were still working on the issue. Later in the call she heard back that Region 10 is no longer providing assistance with bed bug control due to a loss of funding, but the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation is actively working on bed bug projects with funding from EPA, so Tribes may be able to reach out to them for support.

4. TPPC Administrator Updates

Mark summarized the discussion from the Tribal Caucus about choosing a location and dates for the TPPC's Fall meeting. Three TPPC member Tribes or tribal organizations have offered to host the Fall meeting: Institute of American Indian Arts in Santa Fe, New Mexico, Saint Regis Mohawk Tribe in Akwesasne, New York, and Three Affiliated Tribes in New Town, North Dakota. There was also some discussion about potentially scheduling the meeting a bit earlier or later than usual, to avoid problems with government shutdowns that all-too-often wreak havoc with planning and EPA participation in the typical early October timeframe. Mark will send out a survey to the membership asking people to weigh in on the location and timing questions, so we can start planning for the meeting.

Mark also brought up an issue that came out of TPPC member Eric Gjevre's annual circuit rider meeting last month that he wanted to raise with EPA regarding inconsistencies in the Worker Protection Standards (WPS) for golf courses. The basic issue, as described by Renee and Linsey, is that golf courses fall into a grey area when it comes to WPS. Africa Dorame-Avalos, Inter Tribal Council of Arizona (ITCA) explained in more detail that if there is a nursery or greenhouse on the golf course, or if it is actively producing turfgrass for sod, as an agricultural commodity for commercial sale or transplanting (typically called hole 18), that area falls under WPS; but if they're not participating in these activities they are not subject to WPS. For golf courses that don't fall under WPS, this means that workers may not be trained on WPS requirements, and could be exposed to harmful chemicals from pesticide applications. Linsey noted that she has a meeting with her branch tomorrow so she will bring this up with them and see if there's any thought about how to address it.

5. Tribal Caucus Report-out

Already discussed elsewhere in the meeting.

6. Workgroup Report-out

Nina talked about some of the things the Pollinator Protection workgroup has been doing recently, including a pollinator interaction program from Tina Fernandez at Pala for pollinator gardens that she thought **might be good to talk about in the TPPC newsletter**. She also discussed Africanized bees and what to do if a person discovers a hive in their area, and suggested **it could also be a good topic for a newsletter story**. She updated the group on the project by USDA to include tribal names in their PLANTS Database website, and noted that the agency is currently migrating their data to the cloud, but they hope to have it up again soon. Nina mentioned that workgroup member Ed Spevak is preparing some new training sessions, and she's hoping he may be able to open them up to TPPC members.

Mark noted that the Policy workgroup has submitted a couple of comment letters in the past month and is looking at more actions currently in the docket for possible comment.

7. NTC Updates

Skipped as an NTC representative was not on the call.

8. Other Issues/Concerns/Hot Topics

Africa informed the group that ITCA was recently awarded EPA funding for three special projects, including a 3-day training on WPS and pesticide applicator certification requirements for Tribes in May or September of 2027, and she's asking for feedback from Tribes on where & when to hold it. The other projects are for additional WPS training and on-site technical assistance to tribes in Arizona, and for another 3-day comprehensive integrated pest management (IPM) training to tribal pesticide inspectors, applicators, and natural resources staff.

Diania Caudell, California Indian Basketweavers Association noted that they are having their annual gathering June 19th and 20th at the Graton Rancheria in Northern California, so reach out to her if you have questions about it. Diania also stated that she will be presenting at the University of Redlands tomorrow and Friday, and will be talking about TPPC and pesticides, etc.

Africa asked Mark if there were any updates from the Association of American Pest Control Officials (AAPCO) about their invitation for TPPC members to serve on their Endangered Species Act working group. Mark responded that as far as he knew they were just waiting to see if someone from TPPC was willing to do it. Africa said she would be interested in serving on the working group, so she will reach out to them to confirm.

9. Next TPPC Conference Call: Wednesday, June 17, 2026, 2:00-4:00 p.m. EST

*(**Yellow highlighting** in the notes above indicates action items)