

Tribal Pesticide Program Council Executive Committee
Monthly Conference Call
07/15/26
Call Notes – Final

Join by Teams: <https://teams.microsoft.com/meet/22740938037674?p=1Ddfwc1INwjZXQ6aAD>
or phone: 928-331-0022 (conference ID: 570 443 809#)
Meeting ID: 227 409 380 376 74
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Roll call:

Tribes (19)

- Amanda Holm, White Earth Nation
- Brenda Pusher-Begay, White Mountain Apache Tribe
- Camilo Perez, Quechan Indian Tribe
- Carol Hibbard, Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community
- Curry Blankenship, Muscogee Nation
- Dakota Martin, Alaska Native Health Board
- Emilse Osorio, Washington State Department of Agriculture
- Eric Gjevre, Coeur d'Alene Indian Tribe
- Erica Taylor, Cherokee Nation
- Jefferson Biakeddy, Navajo Nation
- Nina Hapner, Kashia Band of Pomo Indians
- Olivia Pospisil, Ponca Tribe of Nebraska
- Renee Keezer, White Earth Nation
- Sarah Deshazer, Spokane Tribe of Indians
- Steve Anderson, Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma
- Tacy Jensen, Gila River Indian Community
- Theodore Puetz, Ak-Chin Indian Community
- Tyler Jacobs, St. Regis Mohawk Tribe
- Virginia Snake-Bumann, Winnebago Tribe

Tribal Organizations (3)

- Africa Dorame-Avalos, Inter Tribal Council of Arizona
- Diania Caudell, California Indian Basketweavers Association
- Zhaashiigid Nooding, White Earth Tribal & Community College

EPA (3)

- Stephanie Burkhardt, EPA/OPP
- Emma Cross, EPA/OECA
- Susan Morales, EPA/Region 9

Other (1)

- Mark Daniels, Institute for Tribal Environmental Professionals

Reported in advance as absent (2)

- Linsey Walsh, EPA/OPP
- Joe Herrera, Yakama Nation

1. Tribal Caucus

2. Welcome/Introductions

Mark Daniels, ITEP facilitated the roll call

3. EPA Updates

Emma Cross, EPA/OECA, reported that she did not have any program updates to share. Stephanie Burkhardt, EPA/OCSPP noted that Linsey Walsh could not join the call because she was attending a meeting with TPPC Chair Renee Keezer, the National Tribal Caucus (NTC), and EPA Office of Chemical Safety and Pollution Prevention (OCSPP) leadership, and that Stephanie was sitting in on this call to take notes for Linsey.

4. TPPC Administrator Updates

Mark provided an update on planning for the Fall TPPC Meeting. The meeting will be hosted by the Saint Regis Mohawk Tribe in northern New York and is scheduled for November 3-5. Jessica Raspitha of SRMT advised the group that weather conditions during that timeframe should be suitable for travel.

Mark stated that registration for the meeting will open near the end of August (approximately August 24), allowing participants to indicate whether they plan to attend in person or virtually. Responses will be collected for several weeks, with travel arrangements expected to begin in early September.

Mark also reported that ITEP's events coordinator has already secured an agreement with the tribal hotel and casino for meeting accommodations. Transportation logistics are currently being developed. Because Saint Regis Mohawk Tribe is located some distance from major airports, attendees may need to travel through the small airport in Massena, New York, or use slightly larger regional airports located approximately 1.5 to 2 hours away. ITEP is exploring shuttle and other transportation options to facilitate attendee travel.

5. Tribal Caucus Report-out

Nina Hapner, Kashia Band of Pomo Indians reported on the Tribal Caucus discussion. The group reviewed the budget and priorities recently presented to the NTC by Renee and Nina.

The Caucus also discussed the recent Supreme Court decision related to glyphosate. Participants expressed concern regarding the decision and its potential implications.

In addition, the group discussed several pesticide registrations and uses associated with per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS). Concerns were raised regarding products that may degrade into PFAS compounds and the potential impacts of those compounds on aquatic ecosystems due to their persistence and toxicity. The group noted that public comment periods are currently open for several of these actions, with deadlines later in July and early August. TPPC is considering providing comments on these issues.

The Caucus also discussed a tribal inspection situation involving questions related to overlapping inspection authorities and jurisdictional responsibilities. Members exchanged perspectives on how similar situations might be handled in the future.

6. Workgroup Updates

A. Policy Workgroup

Mark reported that the Policy Workgroup has not submitted any recent comment letters. Several issues previously open for comment were reviewed but did not generate significant concerns warranting formal comments.

The Workgroup will discuss three pesticide registration actions that involve products EPA has determined are not PFAS, but which meet other PFAS definitions. The products are currently open for public comment, and the Workgroup will consider whether TPPC should submit comments during its next meeting.

B. Pollinator Workgroup

Nina Hapner reported that the Pollinator Workgroup did not meet in July because of field season activities, holidays, and member travel. The group plans to resume meetings in August.

The Workgroup is developing a series of future meetings that will include guest speakers and training opportunities. Potential presentations under consideration include:

- A presentation from Sonoma-Mendocino State Parks regarding management of an endangered butterfly species and coordination with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.
- Lessons learned in restoring prescribed fire as a management tool in coastal grassland habitats that support pollinators.
- A presentation from leaders of the USDA native pollinator laboratory in Utah regarding current research and available resources.

Nina emphasized the value of sharing practical experiences related to habitat management, collaboration with neighboring land managers, and navigating regulatory processes. Members were encouraged to suggest additional speakers or training topics for future meetings.

7. NTC Updates

No formal NTC update was provided. Relevant NTC discussions were covered during the Tribal Caucus report-out.

8. Other Issues / Open Discussion

Susan Morales, EPA/Region 9 shared two California-related updates with the group:

First, she reported that the University of California Integrated Pest Management (UC IPM) Program is developing an interagency action plan to address emerald ash borer in anticipation of the pest's arrival in California. UC IPM is seeking tribal input and points of contact regarding cultural and ecological impacts. Nina noted that outreach efforts are already underway to identify tribes with interests related to ash species and associated cultural uses.

Second, Susan reported that the Smith River Plain Water Quality Management Plan is expected to take effect later this fall. The plan addresses water quality concerns, including copper runoff associated with lily bulb production, and represents a positive step for tribes that have advocated for improvements in the watershed.

Nina asked whether there were any updates regarding proposed FAA regulations affecting drone operations, particularly beyond visual line-of-sight activities and potential implications for tribal pesticide programs, certification, and training requirements. Mark noted that he had not received any recent updates but **would follow up with previous presenters and share any additional resources with the group**. Eric Gjevre, Coeur d'Alene Indian Tribe indicated that he had received information from the Association of American Pesticide Control Officials (AAPCO) regarding beyond visual line-of-sight drone operations and offered to share those materials with the group.

Additional discussion focused on the relationship between evolving drone regulations and pesticide applications, as well as broader considerations regarding oversight and implementation of the technology.

Eric also asked for clarification regarding discussion of Endangered Species Act (ESA) issues during the Tribal Caucus session. Mark noted that ESA implementation remains one of TPPC's priorities and that concerns continue regarding EPA's ability to achieve full ESA compliance under current mitigation approaches. Theodore Puetz, Ak-Chin Indian Community further noted that ongoing discussions regarding the definition of "harm" under the ESA, as well as state implementation efforts and coordination with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, could have significant implications for pesticide regulatory programs moving forward.

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