



**National Tribal**  
AIR ASSOCIATION

## National Tribal Air Association (NTAA)

### FY26 Priorities

The National Tribal Air Association (NTAA) is a member-based organization with 162 Member Tribes. The organization's mission is to advance air quality management policies and programs, consistent with the needs, interests, and unique legal status of American Indian Tribes and Alaskan Natives. As such, the NTAA uses its resources to support the efforts of all federally recognized Tribes in protecting and improving the air quality within their respective jurisdictions. Although the organization always seeks to represent consensus perspectives on any given issue, it is important to note that the views expressed by the NTAA may not be agreed upon by all Tribes. Further, it is also important to understand that interactions with the organization do not substitute for Nation-to-Nation consultation, which can only be achieved through direct communications between the federal government and American Indian Tribal Governments and Alaskan Natives.

As an informational conduit, NTAA recognizes that all Tribes are unique with their own cultures, languages, and types of governance. In providing support for NTAA member Tribes, the organization strives to be mindful of differences in opinions and to continually encourage the U. S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and other federal agencies to recognize that each Tribe knows what is important for their own communities.

Common themes stand out in the issues and needs that face Tribes throughout American Indian and Alaska Native (AI/AN) communities. To support identifying priorities, NTAA acquires regular feedback by interacting with Tribes throughout the year. The following is information garnered from some of these interactions on nationally consistent priorities identified by Tribal Air Program staff.

## FUNDING

Adequate and consistent funding is needed for American Indian and Alaska Native Air Quality Programs.

### **State and Tribal Air Grants**

In FY25, for the FY27 budget, the NTAA is maintaining the recommendation in STAG, reflecting the inflation from FY24 at \$94 million. This will assist Tribes to support the Agency's priority of empowering local decision making through cooperative federalism.

### **Energy Independence and Resilience**

NTAA suggests emphasis be placed on funding availability to Tribes for additional funding sources that encourage energy growth and independence.

### **Indoor Air**

Dedicated funding is needed for Tribal Indoor Air Programs to support activities such as training, monitoring, inspections, and remediation.

### **State Indoor Radon Grants (SIRG)**

NTAA requests larger set-asides and consistent outreach to the Tribes from region-to-region. Applications should include a more efficient and streamlined process.

### **Diesel Emissions Reduction Act Grants (DERA)**

The NTAA supports the on-going Tribal set-asides.

## POLICY AND REGULATION

### **Ambient Air Quality**

#### **Criteria Pollutants**

Tribes monitor criteria pollutants to reduce risks to Tribal communities and individuals by providing site specific data. This promotes Tribal participation in the designation process and addresses ambient air quality and climate resilience for health and environmental impacts to American Indian and Alaska Native communities but also concerns for cultural and spiritual practices.

#### **Permitting:**

##### **Tribes should be co-regulators in the permitting process**

EPA must conduct consultation with Tribes throughout the development and issuance of any air permits.

##### **Support for Tribes in Developing TIPs**

Technical assistance should be made available to Tribe's to develop Tribal Implementation Plans (TIPs) which are crucial for Tribal sovereignty, enabling Tribes to set and enforce their own air quality standards under the Clean Air Act (CAA), rather than relying on federal plans.

#### **Air Toxics**

Air toxics, including pollutants from industrial operations, oil and gas extraction, and wildfire smoke, severely impact Tribal ecosystems by contaminating natural resources, damaging vegetation, and disrupting traditional, subsistence-based lifestyles. Since Tribal communities maintain a close, interconnected relationship with their environment, they face a disproportionate burden from both environmental degradation and the resulting health impacts.

#### **Emerging Pollutants – PFAS/PFOS and 6PPD/6PPD-Q**

The NTAA is concerned that EPA's PFAS Strategy does little to expand the understanding of the impact of PFAS/PFOS through air media. The NTAA encourages more studies on the impact of PFAS/PFOS and 6PPD/6PPD-Q through air exposure and deposition, especially on and near American Indian and Alaska Native communities.

#### **Radiation**

Plans for High Assay Low Enriched Uranium (HALU) Reactors and Fuel Cycle are a growing concern in American Indian and Alaska Native communities.

### **CONSULTATION**

NTAA encourages direct communications between the federal government and American Indian Tribal Governments and Alaskan Natives as interactions with NTAA does not substitute for Nation-to-Nation consultation. Adequate time, no less than 60 days, should be allotted to American Indian Tribal Governments and Alaskan Natives respond to consultation requests.