NTAA MONTHLY UPDATE

SEPTEMBER 2026

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EC Spotlight

Hello NTAA Member Tribes,

My name is Steven Smith, and I am the Air Quality Coordinator for the Shinnecock Indian Nation. I also serve as the Region 2 Alternate on the National Tribal Air Association (NTAA) Executive Committee. I was born and raised on the Shinnecock Indian Nation, located in Southampton on the eastern end of Long Island, New York. The reservation sits on a peninsula known as "the Neck," bordered by Shinnecock Bay, Old Fort Pond, and Heady Creek. The Shinnecock Nation is a federally recognized Tribe, and my people have lived in this area for thousands of years. When I was nine years old, I moved to Albuquerque, New Mexico, where I lived for six years before returning home. Albuquerque was beautiful, but I was happy to come back to Shinnecock.

Before becoming the Air Quality Coordinator, I worked for Hampton Hearth, installing chimneys and wood-burning stoves. In 2017, my sister, Shavonne Smith, who was serving as the Environmental Director, told me about an opening for the Air Quality Coordinator position. I applied, accepted the role, and have now served in that position for nine years.

The Shinnecock Air Program is still in its developmental stages, but we continue to build and expand the program. Funding for our program always remains a challenge. We are currently developing an indoor air

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Newsletter:
The NTAA Monthly Update is an e-newsletter providing updates and resources to Tribes regarding air policy, grants, and resources. To adverstise an announcement, please email Marty.Johnson@nau.edu. To subscribe or unsubsribe from our newsletter, click here.

National Tribal
AIR ASSOCIATION

quality program to better serve our community. Because Shinnecock is located near several heavily traveled roadways on eastern Long Island, emissions from seasonal traffic are a concern and contribute to elevated ozone levels during the warmer months. The Nation is located near the eastern terminus of NY Route 27 (Sunrise Highway), the primary east-west transportation corridor serving Long Island. Route 27 carries substantial seasonal traffic, especially during the summer when visitors travel to the Hamptons. Other factors affecting the Nation's air quality include coastal weather patterns, regional pollution transported from the New York metropolitan area, and smoke from wildfires in Canada.

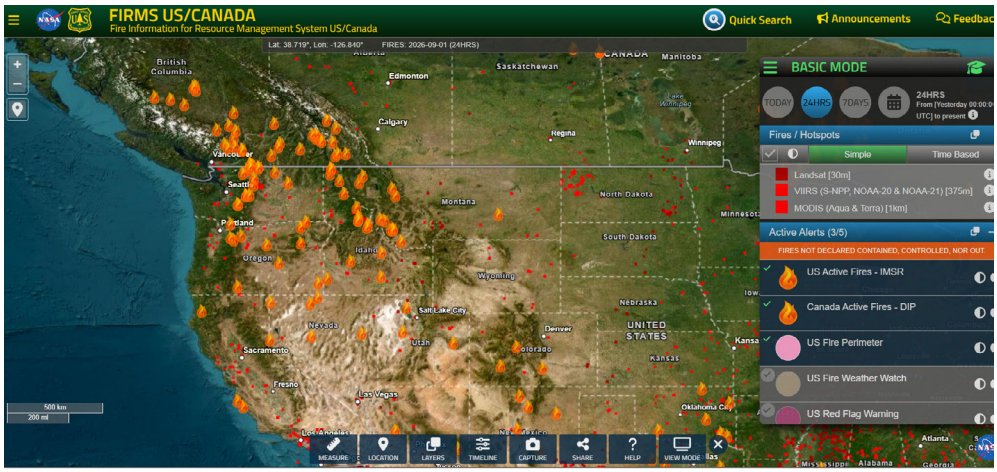
Even with these challenges, I love working to improve the environment and the air quality in my community. When I am not working, I enjoy catching up on my sleep!

FEATURE ARTICLE

BY Nika Bartoo-Smith (This article originally appeared in Indian Country Today and Underscore Native News, as it was a jointly published article)

Relief efforts for Northwest fires: 'The whole rez is on fire'

As wildfires blaze across Native nations throughout the Pacific Northwest, community organizers have quickly rallied together to support relief efforts for those affected by the devastation left in the wake of the fires.

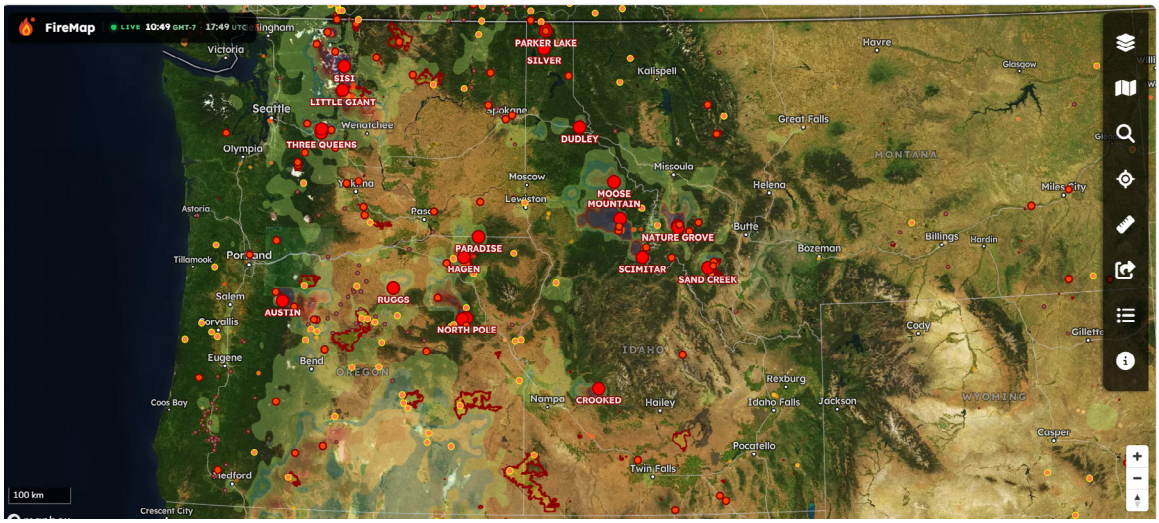


In Washington, people on the Colville Reservation in the Nespelem area have had to evacuate their homes due to the Kaiser Canyon Fire, currently the largest active wildfire in Washington state. As of Wednesday, July 29, more than two dozen homes have been taken by the fire, according to community organizers. "The whole entire rez is on fire," said Faith Zacherle Tonasket, a citizen of the Colville Tribes, founder of River Warriors and xa?xa? Indigenous Birth Justice, a nonprofit organization working to support fire victims. "We're all doing what we can to take care of our communities," she added.

For those impacted by wildfires across Oregon and Washington, there is a huge need for supplies including:

- Water
- Personal hygiene supplies — like soap, tampons, pads, toothbrushes
- Childcare supplies — including diapers, wipes, baby formula and bottles
- Non-perishable and no-cook foods
- Gift cards and hotel donations
- Pet supplies
- Blankets and pillows
- Towels
- New socks
- Small fans and box fans
- Filters
- N95 masks and respirators
- Monetary donations

Most of these efforts are being led by community members and non-profit organizations rallying to gather support from across Oregon and Washington during this time of crisis.



"Those systems are already built in, because this is not the first tragedy we've experienced," said Robin-Michel Lenihan, a Two-Spirit citizen of the Cow Creek Band of Umpqua Tribe of Indians, and a wildfire survivor themself. "Fortunately or unfortunately, we're trained to do this our whole lives to respond to the needs of our communities."

Lenihan is the advancement manager at the Native Arts and Culture Foundation, which is currently accepting donations for the Warm Springs community affected by the wildfires.

In Oregon, much of the Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs Reservation has had to evacuate homes as well due to the Bench Fire. At least five homes and two buildings have been lost already.

Photo by Brenen Helgerson/National Interagency Fire Center

"I'll tell you, it's heavy," said Gilbert Brown, sitting outside Bison Coffeehouse in Northeast Portland on Wednesday morning, collecting supplies to bring out to Warm Springs later in the day.

"Little kids can't go outside because [they] can't breathe," Brown said.

Brown, a citizen of the Klamath Tribes who lives on the North end of the Warm Springs Reservation, has been organizing since Monday to bring supplies from Portland to families in Warm Springs. He has not had to evacuate his home yet, and is hosting two other families who had to evacuate.

"All these places got fires. And we only have so much help for us, so I'm trying to help us," Brown said. His nephew lost his home earlier this week due to the fire. As the fire ate through the foundation of his home it also burned regalia, cultural artifacts and heirlooms that had been in his family for generations. "Just like that, one fire took it away," Brown said.

Below is a list of where to donate for families impacted by fires across Oregon and Washington.

The Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs
The Warm Springs Water Coalition and individual community members have set up drop-off locations for supplies all across Oregon.

In the Portland-Metro Area:
- In Gresham:
  - Representative Ricki Ruiz's District Office at 135 NW 1st Ave., Suite 1, Gresham, OR 97030. Drop-off Monday through Thursday from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.
- In North Portland:
  - Green Anchors at 840 N Bradford St., Portland, OR, 97203. Drop-off from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m.
- In Northeast Portland:
  - Bison Coffeehouse at 3941 NE Cully Blvd., Portland, OR, 97213. Drop-off Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m.
  - Javelina Indigenous Dining at 4636 NE 42nd Ave., Portland, OR 97218. Drop-off Monday through Sunday from 11 a.m. to 8 p.m.
  - Five Stride Skate Shop at 4515 NE Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd., Portland, OR 92711. Drop-off Monday through Saturday 12 p.m. to 5 p.m.
- In Southeast Portland:
  - Native Arts & Cultures Foundation at 800 SE 10th Ave., Portland, OR 97214. Drop-off Monday through Friday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.. Call (503) 766-8458 to meet at the loading dock on Morrison between 10th and 11th.
  - Wool for the People at 1311 SE 9th Ave., Portland, OR 97214. Drop-off Monday through Friday 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.
- In Aloha, Oregon:
  - The 649 at 18647 SW Farmington Rd., Beaverton, OR 97007. Drop-off between 1 p.m. and 10 p.m.

Beyond the Portland-Metro Area:
- In Bend:
  - Wonderland Chicken at 806 NW Brooks St., Bend, OR 97703.
  - Deschutes Land Trust at 210 NW Irving Ave., Suite 102, Bend, OR 97703. Drop-off Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.
  - The Haven Co-working at 1001 SW Disk Dr., Bend, OR 97702. Drop-off Monday through Friday 7:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.
- In Redmond:
  - Pangaea Guild Hall at 652 SW 6th St., Redmond, OR 97756.
- In Madras:
  - Madras Garden Depot at 1665 NW US Hwy. 26, Madras, OR 97741.
- In Government Camp:
  - Mt. Hood Museum at 88900 Government Camp Loop, Government Camp, OR 97208. Email collections@mthoodmuseum.org

For financial donations, donate online to The Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs Wildfire Recovery Fund here.

For more information about what to donate, where to donate and who to contact, the Warm Springs Water Coalition has put together a document compiling the information.

The Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation
Drop-off locations include:
• Omak Eagles Nest at 1168 Bull Rope St., Omak, WA 98841. Contact Leah Cate at (509) 634-1409.
• Colville Service Center at 3041 State Highway 155, Coulee Dam, WA 99116. Contact Desiree Hertenstein at (509) 634-1963.

For hay donations for horses contact Jessica Utt at (509) 634-1406.

River Warriors and xa?xa? Indigenous Birth Justice is also accepting donations to support boots on the ground relief efforts. To donate, contact Faith Zacherle Tonasket at (509) 631-0460.

The Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation
An emergency shelter with clean air for those impacted by the Hagen Fire has been set up at Sunridge Middle School at 700 SW Runnion Ave. in Pendleton, OR 97801.

The Yakama Reservation
The Yakama Nation tribal government is currently accepting monetary donations to support families impacted by the Signal Peak wildfire that started July 24.

The nation is also accepting donations at a central drop-off location located at the Sprung Structure:
150 Robbins Rd., Toppenish, WA 98948.

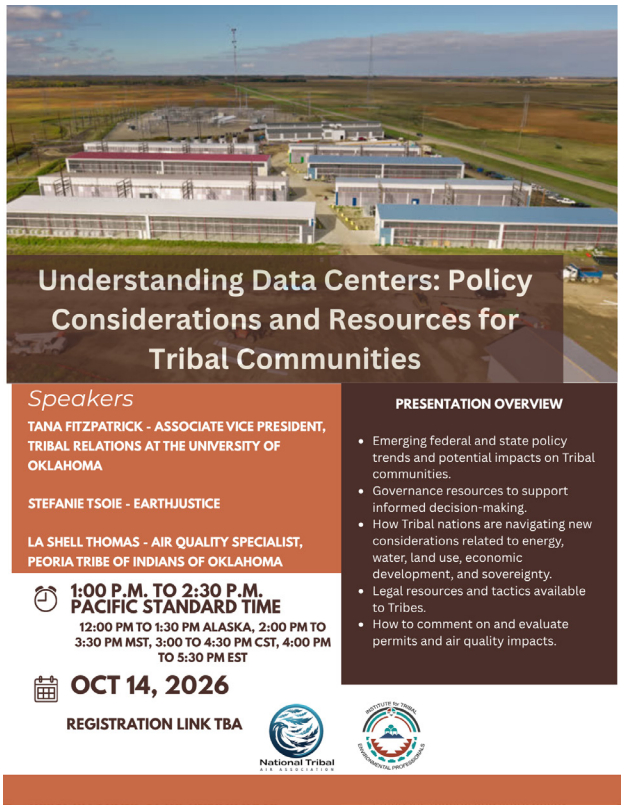
For donation questions, contact Elizabeth Sanchey at whiteswanfire@yakama.com or (509) 945-2939.

NTAA ANNOUNCEMENTS

NTFAQ Report is Now Available
Every year, NTAA staff create an NTFAQ report after a survey is sent out and results are compiled. The report is also a recap of the conference, the theme for that year, highlights, photographs, information about the location and host Tribe, fieldtrips and more. If you were unable to attend NTFAQ or if you want to know what other attendees thought about the conference, we encourage you to read the report on our website.

Zoom to Teams
NTAA has switched all of their meetings from Zoom to Teams. ITEP and NTAA are housed at Northern Arizona University (NAU). The University decided to retire Zoom as a university collaboration platform at the end of June. In July, NTAA sent out new Teams meeting invites and began holding all meetings via Teams.

Understanding Data Centers: Policy Considerations and Resources for Tribal Communities
Learn about emerging federal and state policy trends and potential impacts on Tribal communities. Be informed about governance resources to support decision-making. Understand more about how Tribal nations are navigating new considerations related to energy, water, land use, economic development, and sovereignty. Know where to find legal resources and understand tactics available to Tribes. Know how to comment on and evaluate permits and air quality impacts.
Wednesday, October 14, 2026
1:00 p.m. to 2:30 p.m. PST (12:00 p.m. to 1:30 p.m Alaska, 2:00 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. MST, 3:00 to 4:30 p.m. CST, 4:00 to 5:30 p.m. EST)
Registration TBA



NTAA Workgroups

Office Hours with the PAC
Wednesday, September 16, 2026
12:00 p.m. to 1:00 p.m. PDT
Teams Link

EPA Air Policy Call
Thursday, September, 24, 2026
11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. PDT
Teams Link

Wildfire Smoke Workgroup
Thursday, October 15, 2026
1:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m. PDT
Teams Link

ITEP/TAMS UPDATES

AIAQTP & TAMS Office Hours:
Each month ITEP, EPA, and Tribes will host a rotating schedule of office hours. Please join a lively discussion and ask questions about Grants, Indoor Air Quality, and the TAMS Center.

Grants Office Hours
First Wednesday of every other month, October 7, 2026 at 10:00 a.m. Pacific (9 AK/11 MTN/12 Central/1 EST)
Teams Link

TAMS Center Office Hours
Second Tuesday of every other month, September, 8, 2026 at 11:00 a.m. Pacific (10 AK/12 MTN/1 Central/2 EST)
Teams Link

Indoor Air Quality and Outreach & Education Office Hours
Third Thursday of every other month, September 17, 2026 at 10:00 a.m. Pacific (10AK/12 MTN/ 1 Central/ 2 EST)
Teams Link

National Tribal Infrastructure Coordination Conference
October 5-8, 2026
Reno, Nevada
Click here for more information and to register

AIAQTP In Person Course Schedule
Click here for more information and to register for courses.

EPA ANNOUNCEMENTS

EPA AirKnowledge New Elearning Modules
The EPA AirKnowledge training team is pleased to announce the availability of new elearning modules! These self-instructional modules describe the title V permitting process and the best practices for developing a well-supported title V permit. These modules are available to Tribal, state, and local air agencies through the AirKnowledge Learning Management System (LMS). To access the course on the LMS, Tribal, state and local air agencies and Tribal and multijurisdictional organizations can register, log in, and refer to the "What's New" section on the home page. The materials are available to all other users (including EPA staff) on the airknowledge.gov website.

2026 Fuel Waivers
On August 20, 2026, EPA, in consultation with U.S. Department of Energy and in accordance with the Clean Air Act, issued a temporary waiver to address extreme and unusual fuel supply circumstances affecting all parts of the United States. This action is a renewal of the August 9, 2026, waiver extension. This action extends the ethanol blending limit in gasoline from 10 percent to 15 percent, reinstates the 1 psi allowance for ethanol blends in states where it was previously removed, and waives federal low volatility gasoline standards in two steps. In the first step, it extends the existing volatility waiver through August 31, 2026, maintaining a single national gasoline pool with 9 to 15 percent ethanol content at a common Reid Vapor Pressure standard of 10 psi. In the second step, it waives all Federal volatility standards on September 1, 2026, and pulls forward the wintertime volatility limits that would otherwise apply at the end of summertime control season. For more information, click here.

EPA Tools and Resources Webinar Series
Designing & Implementing Effective Participatory Science Projects
EPA's Lead Service Line Test Bed, Michael Borst, EPA OASES
September 16, 2026
Free webinars are typically held the third Wednesday of every other month from 3:00 - 4:00 PM (ET)
Click here for more information

New Tools for Exceptional Events
EMBER
The updated Expedited Modeling of Burn Events Results (EMBER) tool will expand support for ozone demonstrations resulting from exceptional events. The tool now provides information on ozone impacts and levels from domestic, Canadian, and Mexican fires at U.S. ozone monitoring locations from 2021-2025.

HYSPLIT
EPA released a web-based tool that will allow users to easily browse and access HYSPLIT Trajectory data. This tool provides users with quick access to trajectories, smoke plumes, and fire locations, reducing computationl burden and ensuring a uniform, consistent analysis of trajectories across EE demonstrations.

AirNow Fire & Smoke Map
EPA launched a new historic version of the AirNOW Fire and Smoke Map to provide past map conditions by date and time, giving additional context for fine particulate matter (PM2.5) measurements. The map combines PM2.5 air quality measurements from permanent and temporary monitors and sensors with wildland fire locations and satellite smoke and plume observations.

OTHER ANNOUNCEMENTS

National Congress of American Indians

NCAI Tribal Impact Days

Join us as we gather to celebrate the 25th anniversary of the Tribal Supreme Court project. Events will include a Thursday night reception at the National Museum of the American Indian and a Friday legal colloquium at the Eaton DC hotel. September 15-17, 2026, Washington, D.C.
Learn more and get tickets here.

National Congress of American Indians 83rd Annual Convention and Marketplace

Join the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) in Palm Springs, California, for the 83rd Annual Convention & Marketplace. October 18 -October 22, 2026. Click here for more information and to register.

Click here for NCAI's Event Page

Intermountain West Ozone Exchange

The North Front Range Metropolitan Planning Organization and Pikes Peak Area Council of Governments are jointly hosting a three-day conference on ozone science and attainment challenges specific to the Intermountain West states.
October 26-28, 2026
Loveland, CO
Click here for more information and to register.

Rocky Mountain Institute

Throughout the year, RMI experts connect with partners and communities via both remote and live, in-person events. Click here for a calendar of events.

Tribal Exchange Network Group (TXG)

Tribal Exchange Network Group (TXG)
Monthly Tribal Data Drop-In Session
Thursday, September 17, 2026 from 10:00 a.m. - 11:30 p.m. Pacific
Click here to register

NACAA

Washington Update

Environmental Law Institute

Click here to view ELI's Calendar of seminars, courses & special events.

FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

Tribal Funding Registry
The Tribal Funding Registry is a Native-led platform that brings together federal, state, corporate, foundation, and Tribal funding opportunities in one place. Built for Tribal Nations and Indigenous-led organizations, with guided support from staff who understand Tribal context. Click here for more information.

DOE Energy Infrastructure Reinvestment Financing
This program will guarantee loans to projects that retool, repower, repurpose, or replace energy infrastructure that has ceased operations or that enable operating energy infrastructure to avoid, reduce, utilize, or sequester air pollutants or anthropogenic emissions of greenhouse gases. Grant deadline is 09/30/2026. Click here for more information.

NDN Collective Community Action Fund
The 2026 Community Action Fund Grant Cycle is Now Open! With grants up to $20,000 USD the Community Action Fund (CAF) grantsupports Indigenous-led direct actions and organizing efforts that are often urgent and time sensitive. The CAF prioritizes frontline, grassroots and community-based efforts that defend Indigenous Peoples' rights, communities and Nations, including responses to climate disasters. Applications accepted on a rolling basis until 10/16/2026. Click here for more information.

DOE Office of Indian Energy: On-Request Technical Assistance
Rolling Deadline. Indian tribes and Alaska Native villages can apply annually to receive on-request technical assistance with energy planning; housing, building energy efficiency, and resilience; project development; village power; and policy and regulation. Assistance is provided by the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) Office of Indian Energy and its national laboratories, along with other partnering organizations, at no cost. Click here for more information.

USDA Emergency Community Water Assistance Grants
Applications accepted continuously. This program provides grants to assist rural communities that have had a significant decline in quantity or quality of drinking water. Grant may fund waterline extensions from existing systems, construction of new water lines; repairs to existing systems, construction of new wells, reservoirs, transmission lines, treatment plants, and other water sources. Priority is given to areas with less than 10,000 people, low-income areas, and communities facing imminent decline and shortage of water. Click here for more information.