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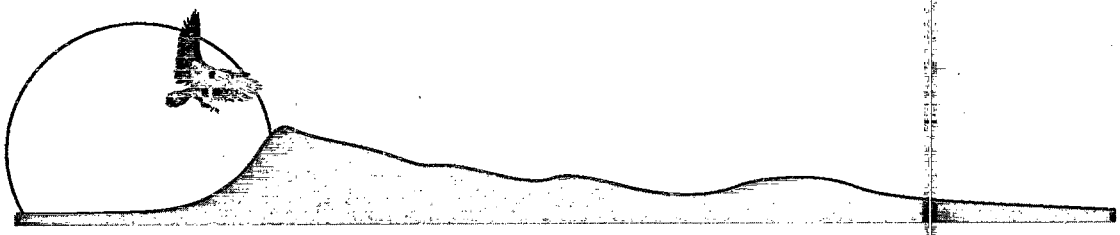
EPA Native American Network



A RCRA Information Exchange

AROUND THE REGIONS

The Campo Experience

Campo Indian Reservation is one of the Kumeyaay (Koome-YAI) tribes of San Diego County, California. The historic territory of the Kumeyaay stretches from northern San Diego County into the northern Baja (Mexico). The three main bands of the Kumeyaay are the Ipaay, the Tipaay, and the Pai Pai (entirely in Mexico).

Nine reservations in the county from the Tipaay band of the Kumeyaay include the Barona, Viejas, Jamul, Capitan Grande, Cuyapaipe, Manzanita, La Posta, Sycuan, and the Campo. The total Tipaay population is about 1,500.

To improve our economic status, the Campo members began a solid waste project in 1987. Under the General Council System, a framework was developed by the Tribe to structure the administration of a solid waste program. Ultimately, the business side of the project was separated from Tribal politics, and the Campo Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) was created to maintain Tribal control of the project. The Tribe maintained the financial resources for expertise when needed and developed standards that met or exceeded California's. Enforcement powers for the Tribal agency were developed.

With this framework in place, the Tribal corporation negotiated with seven major waste firms. The Tribe's conditions were so strict that it took several months to find a company willing to meet them. The process culminated in September 1990, when the General Council voted to approve the conditional lease to a waste management firm. The condition in the lease is an acceptable Environmental Impact Study (EIS). The Department of the Interior's policy requires BIA involvement as the lead agency for

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Recycling Project at Cherokee Reservation

Last year the North Carolina Community Club Council composed of officers from all 10 community development clubs on the Cherokee Reservation decided to clean up the Reservation and to do something about the environment. Following a seminar on waste management recycling, sponsored by the Cherokee Reservation Cooperative Extension Service and the Community Club Council, a Recycling Committee was established.

The Committee faced a number of problems, including funding and finding a site for the center. The recycling center was constructed from funds donated by civic organizations, clubs, and private businesses and individuals. (One lady even gave the prize money she won in the local garden contest!) The Eastern Band of Cherokees gave the committee a small piece of property for the recycling center, and the Oconoluftee Job Corps contributed the workers for its construction.

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IHS and Solid Waste

The Aberdeen, South Dakota area office of the Indian Health Service (IHS) encompasses four states in which there are 16 Indian reservations. Many of the tribes here have had an increased awareness of solid waste. All of the tribes have organized collection systems and 75 percent have some type of organized solid waste disposal. Thirty-three percent of the tribes have a solid waste program which is organized in a formal manner.

Not only is there geographical diversity in this region of the Upper Great Plains, but also diversity in the way solid waste services are provided on each reservation. For example: Three tribes have established their own disposal systems. Each system has regular cleanups, perimeter fencing to control access, and litter control fencing. Each tribe also has attempted to control unauthorized burning. Six reservations pay a modest (but increasing) fee to haul wastes off site. Off-site disposal could reduce the tribes' potential liability for the waste.

Five tribes first began disposal programs in 1990: The Pine Ridge Reservation as a result of the Bluelegs Decision (see story in last issue) and the Fort Berthold Reservation as a result of the Tribe taking a strong leadership role and federal assistance.

Undoubtedly, tribal interest in and concern about solid waste issues has increased because of the Blue Legs case. The anticipation of the new EPA landfill regulations also has increased tribal awareness.

Contact: Doug Jensen, IHS, (605) 325-7491

Money Matters (continued)

Multimedia Assistance Agreements for Indian Tribes

EPA's 1991 appropriations provide Administrator William Reilly with authority "to make grants to 'Federally recognized Indian tribes' . . . for the development of multimedia environmental programs." EPA has developed the national policy guidelines for this two-year program and identified about $1.2 million within the budget to implement the program in FY 91.

Federally recognized tribes and tribal consortia are eligible to receive multimedia assistance agreements. The purposes of the grants are to support tribal environmental program management capacity-building tailored to individual tribal needs; foster compliance with environmental statutes; and establish a communications capability with federal, state, and local agencies. Under these grants, tribes can develop environmental program infrastructures, environmental codes, and the capacity to perform inspections, monitoring, planning, assessment, and corrective actions.

The grants are administered and managed at the regional level. Interested tribes are encouraged to contact your EPA Regional Indian Program Coordinator for more information about the program and grant applications.

—Contact: Katie Biggs, (202) 260-5078

Note: Senator McCain of the Indian Senate Select Committee on Indian Affairs has introduced the Indian Environmental General Assistance Program Act of 1991 (S.668). This bill provides for capacity-building for tribes and tribal consortia through grants for planning, developing, and establishing environmental protection programs on Indian lands in all media, including solid and hazardous waste.

Technical Assistance Grants (TAGs) Promote Community Involvement

TAGs provide funds to community groups living near Superfund sites on the National Priorities List (NPL) so they can get expert advice to independently monitor and interpret the detailed technical studies and information related to Superfund site cleanups. Eight Superfund sites (already on or proposed for listing on the NPL) are on Native American lands.

EPA believes public participation in remedy selection for cleanups is vital. Those most affected by the Superfund site need to be well-informed to better understand and articulate their concerns. Most of the information relevant to cleanups, however, is highly technical data that is difficult for the average person to understand. With an initial TAG award of $50,000, a group of concerned and affected citizens can bridge the knowledge gap by hiring a technical advisor from one of the appropriate sciences, such as geology, toxicology, or epidemiology. The advisor's job is to translate and

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Cherokee Recycling

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Specialist with NC State University are coordinating the workshop.

The Reservation population is working very hard toward improving their environment. At the recent dedication of the recycling center, Driver Pheasant, the Education Outreach Coordinator of the Cherokee Museum, opened the ceremony with a quote from Chief Seattle: "You did not weave the web of life; you are merely a strand in it. Whatever you do to the web, you do to yourself." Chief Seattle's statement explains the Indian's view of the sacredness of the earth.

—Contact: Eddie Almond, Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians, (704) 497-6611

Money Matters

EPA Science Scholarships for Native Americans

EPA has awarded a $120,000 grant to the American Indian Science and Engineering Society (AISES) to fund a college scholarship program for students who qualify on the basis of academic achievement and a commitment to the needs and culture of American Indian tribes. The scholarships are $4,000 per student for one year of study and are awarded on a competitive basis. Applicants must: (1) be accepted for full-time study at an accredited four-year college or university, having completed at least two years of college work with a minimum grade point average of 2.5 (students in graduate programs also are eligible); (2) major in one of the environmental science or engineering disciplines, to include chemistry, biology, biochemistry, chemical engineering, environmental science, hydrology, environmental economics, toxicology, entomology, and other related disciplines; (3) submit a brief statement explaining when and how knowledge of tribal culture was acquired (work experience, study, living on a reservation); (4) submit an essay of 250 words or less stating personal commitment to environmental protection on tribal lands; and (5) agree to work summers on a reservation or at EPA, if a professional job is offered. Scholarship awards are scheduled to be announced at the annual AISES meeting in Washington, D.C., in November 1992.

—Contact: Dick Longmire, (703) 308-8553

Bulletin Board

Second U.S. Conference on Municipal Solid Waste

In response to the overwhelming success of the First U.S. Conference on Municipal Solid Waste, EPA is sponsoring the Second U.S. Conference on Municipal Solid Waste in June 1992. The Conference will offer more than 30 sessions and workshops on planning, legislation, and all aspects of solid waste management. Nine main areas will be covered: integrated planning and management; economics and costs of solid waste management; reduction and reuse; recycling and composting; combustion; land disposal; education and outreach; and special wastes. Anyone interested in participating as a panelist or speaker needs to submit a brief abstract of the proposed topic and a brief professional biographical sketch, by October 22, 1991 to:

Bhawna Agarwal
Assistant Conference Planner
SWANA/GRCDA; P.O. Box 7219
Silver Spring, MD 20910
(301) 585-2898; FAX: (301) 589-7069

Contact: Susan Mann, MSW Conference Coordinator, EPA, (202) 260-6263.

Memorandum of Agreement

The Environmental Protection Agency, the Bureau of Indian Affairs, the Indian Health Service, and the Department of Housing and Urban Development have signed a Memorandum of Agreement concerning environmental protection on Indian lands. The agreement defines the responsibilities of the four agencies with respect to controlling and preventing pollution on Indian lands and allows for close cooperation by the agencies in fulfilling mutual obligations to tribes.

Contact: Martin D. Topper, (202) 260-5051.

OSW's Peer Match Program

EPA's Office of Solid Waste has a variety of programs designed to assist communities with managing municipal solid waste. One such program, funded by the Municipal and Industrial Solid Waste Division (MISWD), is the Peer Match program. This program is designed to "match" experts in municipal solid waste management with communities seeking solutions to their specific problems. For example, if a community is interested in starting a recycling program, an expert with experience in working with a community of that size, with the same basic requirements, is "matched" to that community. The program is operated through grants to the International City Managers Association (ICMA) and the Solid Waste Association of North America (SWANA, formerly GRCDA).

Contact: Sarith Guerra of ICMA at (202) 962-3649 or Charlotte Frola of SWANA at (301) 585-2898.

Insights

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death in the family. What I saw culturally violated the spirit of my culture's beliefs as to how we were created."

In addition to imparting a wealth of information, the workshop helped break down myths about the federal government, said Patrick Padia of Fort Duchesne, Utah. He also thought it helped to foster greater trust among Tribes. Others seemed to agree. By the conference's end, Arlene Luther (Navajo) and Phyllis Young, representing the Standing Rock Sioux, were excitedly plotting future action together.

Although skeptical of industrial quick-fixes, Young was optimistic about finding an eventual meeting place between evolving industry and timeless Native American beliefs.

Hotline Information

The RCRA/Superfund Hotline and the Emergency Planning & Community Right-to-Know Hotline operates Monday-Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 7:30 p.m., EST. To contact the RCRA/Superfund Hotline, call: 1-800-424-9346; TDD: 1-800-553-7672 (hearing impaired). In Washington, D.C., the number is (703) 920-9810; TDD (703) 486-3323.

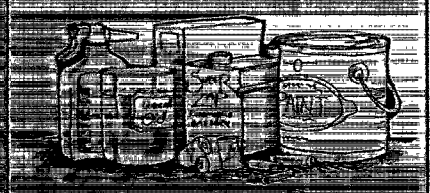
To contact the Emergency Planning Hotline, call: 1-800-535-0202; TDD: 1-800-553-7672 (hearing impaired). In Washington, D.C., the number is (703) 920-98777; TDD (703)-486-3323.

Office of Solid Waste
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
401 M Street, S.W.
OS-305
Washington, D.C. 20460

Official Business
Penalty for Private Use
$300

Now You Know . . .

The average household generates more than 20 pounds of household hazardous waste per year. As much as 100 pounds can accumulate in the home and remain there until the family moves or cleans it out.



TAGs

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communicate the technical data to community members through a variety of methods that include public meetings, newsletters, pamphlets, etc.

A group of "affected" individuals (*affected* may mean actual or threatened economic or health effects) may apply for a TAG award. Tribal governments, as political subdivisions are ineligible, but tribal members who form individual groups are eligible. The applicant(s) must complete the TAG application form and meet certain criteria before any award can be made. EPA already has awarded a TAG to the Akwesasne Task Force on the Environment for the General Motors-Massena Superfund site in Hogansburg, New York.

Contact: Melissa Schapiro, (703)-308-8340

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