

Attachment 3: Geographic-Based Tribal Environmental Issues

Eastern Woodland

- Brownfields and underground storage tanks (USTs)
- Open dumps
- Funding for sustainable programs (e.g., composting)
- Models for sustainable environmental programs
- Developing a complementary program to the three-year UST compliance inspections (e.g., an annual reporting requirement between the three-year inspections to increase compliance and prevent brownfields from occurring)
- Timely feedback (e.g., within three months) after the UST inspection in order to maintain a connection with the owner/operator
- Outreach and information about biodiesel, vegetable oil, and food waste. (Tribes do not know if current tanks can handle biodiesel storage; community members are experimenting with blended fuels. Not clear which regulations apply, where to find the information, or how to respond to releases of these materials.)
- Composting
- Storm water best management practices
- Recyclables marketing
- Hazardous materials collection, transportation, and storage (e.g., guidance as to whether an annual materials collection is a good way to deal with hazardous waste; help setting up a facility that can collect these materials)
- Materials reuse opportunities

Plains

- Gas and oil exploration and production
- Disposal of waste products left by subcontractors (U.S. Bureau of Reclamation is not always present to monitor subcontractor activities)
- Funding for tribal personnel needed to implement integrated solid waste management plans
- Assistance shifting to source reduction as a better alternative to waste management
- Need to work with ITEP and tribal council members to obtain more funding through OSWER

Southwest to West

- Uranium contamination from mining activities
- Achieving alignment between the OSWER tribal strategy and individual tribes' plans (note that there are great differences among various tribes' plans)
- Ensuring safe drinking water
- Agricultural and cultural issues
- Human and drug smuggling, and related safety issues
- Engaging other agencies and resources to help implement OSWER tribal strategy
- Air quality

- Continuity of environmental professional staff (given huge job turnover in small tribes); need to invest in long-term employment of tribal members by providing job security and education
- Increasing interaction among government entities (tribes and local, state, and federal government)
- Trust in tribes' ability to implement waste management programs (note that EPA's many requirements for tribes seems to signify a lack of trust that tribes can do this)

Pacific Northwest

- Equipping tribal solid waste management systems to handle construction and demolition waste
- Finding reuse options for forestry waste and slag piles
- Federal air regulations
- Establishing integrated waste management plans
- Assistance implementing a plan (if one exists)
- Open dumping
- Training

Alaska

- Alaska's unique geographical challenges (e.g., long distances between villages)
- Open burning
- Communication between State of Alaska and native villages (given the state's resistance to recognizing tribes)
- Obtaining running water for Alaska native villages (over fifty percent do not have it; people have to bring their sewage to the landfill, which causes health problems)
- Municipal, mining, and military waste
- Raw sewage in the river, and related water quality issues with Canada
- Past mining activities (issues include open abandoned mines and gold and mercury issues; permits for new mines will create additional mining problems)
- Need to relocate native villages due to coastal erosion (one village's landfill was washed into the sea)
- Burning plastics and electronics
- Above-ground storage tanks
- Establishing a long-term view of solid waste issues -- beyond 5 years, even beyond a generation
- Nationwide emergency response training for tribal people
- Hazardous waste training
- Rural Landfill Operator training
- Source reduction
- Determining which toxins and hazardous wastes are a priority (what should we deal with first; what is causing the most damage)
- New technologies for solid waste management
- Educating young people