"The Official Newsletter of the Inter-Tribal Environmental Council"

ITEC NEWS

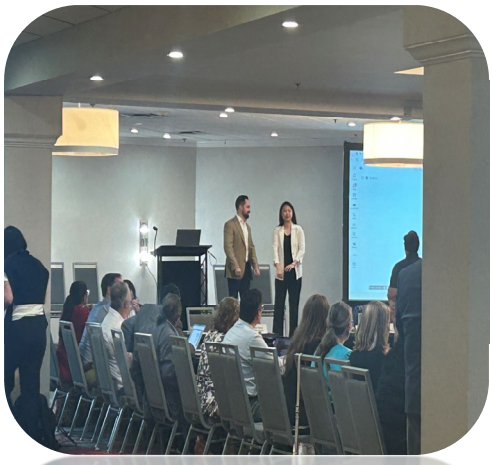
Volume 29 Issue 1

ITEC Member Tribes

Absentee-Shawnee Tribe
Alabama-Coushatta Tribe
Alabama-Quassarte Tribe
Apache Tribe
Caddo Nation
Cherokee Nation
Cheyenne/Arapaho Tribes
Citizen Potawatomi Nation
Comanche Nation
Coushatta Tribe of Louisiana
Delaware Nation
Delaware Tribe
Eastern Shawnee Tribe
Fort Sill Apache Tribe
Iowa Tribe
Jicarilla Apache Nation
Kaw Nation
Kialegee Tribal Town
Kickapoo Tribe
Kiowa Tribe
Miami Tribe
Modoc Tribe
Muscogee Nation
Osage Nation
Otoe-Missouria Tribe
Ottawa Tribe
Pawnee Nation
Peoria Tribe
Ponca Tribe
Pueblo of Laguna
Pueblo of Pojoaque
Pueblo of Santa Clara
Pueblo of Taos
Pueblo of Tesuque
Quapaw Nation
Sac & Fox Nation
Seneca-Cayuga Nation
Shawnee Tribe
Thlopthlocco Tribal Town
Tonkawa Tribe
United Keetoowah Band of Cherokees
Wichita & Affiliated Tribes
Wyandotte Nation
Ysleta del Sur Pueblo
Zuni Tribe

The Regional Tribal Operations Committee Tribal Caucus meeting was held on April 14, 2026. Topics of discussion included: NTC Support Funding, WOTUS Update, QMP Update, Data Centers, and SAFETEA update. The meeting also included NTC, TECO and IRAC meeting updates as well as updates from the various committees and work groups in the region. The meeting ended with action item updates and scheduling for Summer meetings.

The Regional Tribal Operations Committee meeting was held on April 15, 2026. EPA Regional Administrator Scott Mason IV gave an introduction and welcome to Tribal officials, state of Oklahoma Department of Energy Partners, and OITA Principal Deputy Assistant Administrator Victoria Tran. Many great discussions occurred between everyone present, which will





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29th Annual Tribal Environmental Summit

The 29th Annual Tribal Environmental Summit was held on April 15-17, 2026, in Dallas, TX. Each year this summit allows for tribes, organizations, agencies, and individuals to attend educational sessions and engage in open discussion.

There were over 150 total attendees and 21 presenters, with numerous Tribes/Pueblos and departments teaming together to provide the most recent knowledge regarding our natural resources and environment. The opening ceremonies began the event with a cultural honor guard and drum group, followed by an invocation and welcome remarks from Stacey Dwyer, EPA Deputy Regional Administrator and Governor Mark Mitchell, Pueblo of Tesuque.

Those involved in this year's Tribal Environmental Summit left with gained insight on a multitude of topics, and also were able to visit with old and new associates.





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Director's Corner

Tristen Tucker, Delaware Tribe of Indians Environmental Director

Where is your Tribal Community located?

The Delaware Tribe of Indians is headquartered in Bartlesville, OK.

How many community members are served by the Environmental department?

The Environmental Department serves around 1,000-1,500 community members.

How long have you been the Environmental Director?

I have been the Environmental Director for my tribe for two and a half years and I've loved every minute of it.

What are the primary environmental concerns that affect your tribal community?

The primary concern that affects our community is solid waste. Many community members are unsure of how/where they can dispose of certain items, or what they can throw away vs. recycle. Also, since the city of Bartlesville does not have a curbside pickup recycling program, I have been encouraging community members and tribal staff to recycle as much as possible.

As an Environmental Tribal Director tell us what you enjoy most about your work?

What I enjoy most about my job is being able to make a positive impact within the community. I love doing outreach and being able to teach our community members about the environment and what we can do to protect it. Being able to educate about the environment and how to care for it is the key to a brighter future.

What have been your biggest challenges?

The biggest challenge has been cultivating a shared concern about the environmental impact everyone plays a role in on a daily basis. The disconnect and lack of engagement/care directly impacts things such as: The accumulation of waste, understanding the necessity of botanical diversity to ensure healthy ecosystems for insects and animals to not just survive, but thrive within their environment. Understanding biodiversity and the roles certain insects and otherwildlife have within the ecosystem, that often get a bad rap, due to fear and misunderstanding. I am making it a priority to provide the proper education and resources to highlight the importance of taking individual responsibility in ensuring we are all doing what we can to be good stewards of our environment.

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Director's Corner Cont.

Tristen Tucker, Delaware Tribe of Indians Environmental Director

What are some of your current projects or future plans for your tribe's environmental programs to address tribal environmental needs or concerns?

I am presently working on developing a Styrofoam recycling program. In the near future I would like to implement a composting program to expand our current solid waste program. My overall goal is for our tribal headquarters to become solid waste free. I plan to do this by educating about recycling, explaining ways to divert waste from landfills, and teaching different ways to reuse materials that would have normally been thrown out. Another goal I have besides solid waste is to create a more environmentally friendly community by planting more trees, creating pollinator gardens, and making more habitat that promotes biodiversity.



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Blue Thumb Class

As a part of the General Assistance Program Grant from E.P.A. the Cherokee Nation Office of Environmental Programs is offering two (2) E-Waste Pick-up events in Tahlequah during the year. The first of these events was held on December 4, 2025 at the Cherokee Nation Warehouse in Tahlequah. This event, for Cherokee Nation Employees and families, was quite a success. There were 52 total vehicles that dropped off over 12 pallets of E-Waste with a total weight of 5,280 pounds.

"This event not only helps recycle the E-Waste but also keeps it out of our limited amount of landfill space and helps employees and citizens feel good about helping to recycle valuable assets" stated Shaun West, Environmental Manager for Cherokee Nation Environmental Programs.





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Upcoming Events:

THE 31ST ANNUAL

Inter-Tribal Environmental Summit

Osage Casino Hotel, Tulsa
951 W 36th St N
Tulsa, OK 74127

July 28-30, 2026



TWO-DAY TRAINING AGENDA

FROM OPPORTUNITY TO AWARD

GRANT PROCESS, GRANT WRITING, AND TECHNICAL WRITING FOR STRONGER PROPOSALS

August 26–27, 2026
Training hours: 8:30 a.m.–4:00 p.m.

Cherokee Nation Environmental Programs Office
206 E. Allen Road
Tahlequah, OK 74464

NATIVE LEARNING CENTER

SEE Renewal

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Check out ITEC's YouTube Channel:

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC42GM_3wppOEPkgFEUj_CgQ

ITEC on the web

Check out the ITEC webpage for information on upcoming events, training and newsletters.

Please visit us at: **www.itecmembers.org**

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The Cherokee Nation Environmental Programs (CNEP) publishes ITEC News each quarter. The mission statement is to protect the health of Native Americans, their natural resources, and their environment as it relates to air, land and water. To accomplish this mission, ITEC provides technical support, environmental services, and assistance in developing Tribal environmental programs to the member Tribes.

The viewpoints contained in this newsletter are not necessarily those of the USEPA or the CNEP/ITEC. Free and open discussion of all environmentally related issues is strongly encouraged. We also encourage submission of letters, comments, and articles from readers so as to promote a greater awareness among our people about environmental issues and to foster the free exchange of information, technology, and culturally relevant values of Tribal people.

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