

Tips on Developing Your EPA-Tribal Environmental Plan

Background

Under the new GAP Guidance, EPA and tribes must develop joint EPA-Tribal Environmental Plans. ETEPs are living documents that will be actively used as a management tool by both EPA and the tribe to ensure work is being done in support of agreed upon priorities and that progress is being made over time. ETEPs do not need to be complex and long to serve their intended purpose. They will document a tribe's needs and priorities, and therefore, will be unique to each tribe.

ETEP Components

Tribes and EPA will work closely to gather information needed for the four required components of an ETEP:

- (1) Identification of tribal environmental program priorities, including capacity building and program implementation goals
- (2) Identification of EPA program priorities and management requirements
- (3) Development of an inventory of regulated entities
- (4) Identification of mutual roles and responsibilities

Having these components of a plan in place will help ensure that GAP work plans are developed to support the long-term priorities and goals of the tribe and funds are directed toward building environmental program capacities.

Timeline & Format for Development of ETEPs

Timeline: All tribes must develop an ETEP to be eligible for GAP funding, but EPA will have a tiered schedule with a certain number of tribes developing ETEPs jointly with EPA each year through FY2017. Your Project Officer will contact you to determine together the best time to schedule development of your ETEP. No additional funds are available beyond GAP base funding. Tribes can use staff time under GAP to work on ETEPs.

Format: The specific format and approach to developing ETEPs may vary from tribe to tribe and region to region. Maximum flexibility is provided as to how ETEPs are developed.

- A tribe and EPA may decide to develop a streamlined document that succinctly addresses the four components.
- A tribe and EPA may update existing planning/priority documents (such as TEAs), to the extent they are useful and still relevant, to ensure they address the four ETEP components.
- It is recommended that each agreement covers no more than a 5 year time-period to achieve specific capacity development milestones.
- Once an ETEP is developed, GAP work plans must contain tasks that are related to accomplishing goals identified in the ETEPs.

Resources

For a copy of the new GAP Guidance, go to <http://www.epa.gov/tribal/GAP-guidance-final.pdf> Detailed information on the background, purpose and development of an ETEP is provided in section 4.0 of the Guidance.

Please contact your EPA Project Officer with questions.