Tribal Exchange Network Projects: Success Story Profile
Publishing of Cherokee Nation Data to a Publicly Accessible Web Page

Project Overview:
Cherokee Nation Environmental Programs (CNEP) published environmental data to a publicly accessible web page to improve access of environmental information by the tribal population and the public at large. CNEP also made historical data available on the web page in Extensible Markup Language (XML) format. This increased the visibility and usability of Cherokee Nation air monitoring data.

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The Cherokee Nations jurisdiction is comprised of 14 counties in NE Oklahoma, including 6 full and 8 partial counties within Oklahoma Tribal Statistical Areas (OTSAs). The jurisdiction is estimated to be 7,000 square miles.
**What were some challenges you faced?** We did have some issues with personnel changes. One of the individuals in IT that first assisted us with the project left unexpectedly, and we basically had to start over. The second time around we made sure we involved several people from the department so that others knew the scope of the project and what we were doing. I also made sure to outline the basics of the project and who to contact in IT with any issues and include that information in a folder by our data hosting computer in case there are any problems while I am away.

**What are some of the most noteworthy lessons learned you would like to share?** I was amazed at how many departments may touch one aspect of the project. Be prepared to explain what you are trying to accomplish several times to many different people. And keep that contact information! It will come in handy.

**Was the project multi-media or did it focus on one particular media?** This project focused on air monitoring data.

**What was innovative about this project?** We used existing tools to publish the data. The mapping tools were in place as part of the jurisdictional boundary tools used by the Tag Office. To my knowledge, this is the first time any environmental data has been published publicly by the Tribe.

**When did the tribe begin planning this project?** Making data public had been discussed in the past, but we weren't sure the best way to move forward. We spoke with our Information Technology (IT) department and determined that this was something that could be done internally. No contractors were hired for this project, and no additional training was involved. There was a lot of coordination between different departments [Environmental, IT, Geographic Information System (GIS), and Communications].

**What are some of the results or outcomes of your EN project?** We publish our data to national databases, but the data is typically three months in arrears (for AQS), or access is limited (must have a password to run reports on AirNow). We can now point anyone to our site to see near-real-time monitoring data at all of our sites. It also allows people to see exactly where we are monitoring data and what pollutants are being monitored. I also have links to our Inter-Tribal Environmental Council website and my contact information if they need more detail. The link to the data is on the main page of the Cherokee Nation site, so it is easy to find. We also displayed the Air Quality Index (AQI) on the Cherokee Nation TV channel, which plays in the waiting rooms in several Cherokee Nation offices (tag office, clinics, main complex, etc.).