



Charter of the Exchange Network Tribal Governance Group

November 2019

Background

The Exchange Network (EN) is a partnership among States, Territories, Tribes, and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to improve and expand the exchange of environmental information through standardized data formats and automated data exchanges. All partners in the EN share in its management and administration responsibilities. The EN is the foundation of the E-Enterprise for the Environment (EE) initiative which is governed by the E-Enterprise Leadership Council (EELC), the EE/EN Management Board (MB), and the EE/EN Interoperability and Operations Team (IOT). While tribes participate in each of these groups as members, the Tribal Governance Group (TGG) was created to foster broader involvement in the EN from tribes across the nation, and further inform EPA and EN leadership about the unique considerations for tribal environmental management. This document outlines a charter for the TGG, an independent body from the formal EE/EN governance structure, in order to clearly articulate the group's mission, activities, and procedures.

Article I: Mission & Purpose

The *mission* of the EN Tribal Governance Group (TGG) is to support tribes' management and communication of their environmental data as well as to use this data to advocate for tribal interests in order to preserve tribal lifeways, maintain cultural integrity, and enhance tribal members' sense of place.

The purpose of the TGG is to:

- to promote tribal sovereignty by empowering tribes to make informed environmental decisions
- facilitate access to resources and tools for improving data management and exchange solutions
- and inform and collaborate with EE governance groups.

The TGG will encourage its members to formally participate in EE governance to ensure that all participants in the EE governance understand the unique tribal cultural values and environmental concerns.

Article II: Procedures

The TGG will follow the procedures outlined below for all activities.

Decision-making:

All decisions of the TGG shall be made by consensus of those present. In the event that no quorum (two-thirds) of TGG members are present, the official proceedings and any decision-making shall be postponed.

Meeting Schedule:

At least one annual face-to-face meeting will be held in conjunction with the Tribal EN Meeting. Additional face-to-face meetings may be scheduled as necessary, such as in conjunction with the National EE Meeting .

Monthly meetings via teleconference will be conducted on a regular schedule as determined by the TGG and Project Administrator. **All TGG members are encouraged to participate as their schedules allow.**

TGG will schedule regular calls with US EPA Exchange Network partners to ensure ongoing communication and cooperation.

Special meetings or teleconferences can be called by TGG members or the Project Administrator as needed.

Meeting Procedures:

TGG Members and Project Administrator will come prepared and will participate fully in meeting proceedings.

Agendas for meetings will be proposed by the TGG Chair, prepared by the Project Administrator, and established through consensus according to activities outlined in the TGG Annual Workplan.

The Project Administrator will prepare and distribute meeting minutes within 10 business days following the meeting. Minutes will be summarized by topic, not transcribed, with action items highlighted and the responsible party/parties specified. Minutes will be shared with TGG members for review and approval; explicit approval of minutes by the TGG will occur during the next regularly scheduled meeting.

Revisions to Charter

The TGG Charter will be reviewed by TGG members annually. All proposed changes shall be approved by TGG consensus..

Representation to Outside Entities

Individual TGG members may represent the TGG to other entities based on consensus of the TGG.

In the absence of a quorum, formal documentation from the TGG requires written approval of the TGG Chair.

Article III: Group Structure & Membership

Membership Criteria

1. Members must be an employee or direct affiliate (e.g. member of a tribe's environmental or governmental board, etc.) of a tribe or tribal organization and may not be employees of companies who are or may be contracted to do work under the EN.
2. Prospective members are required to submit the TGG Member Application which must be approved by consensus of the current TGG membership.
3. Members should have a working knowledge of tribal issues relating to EN principles.
4. Members must have approval of the tribe or tribal organization which they represent.
5. The TGG will strive for diversity of regional representation as well as media background and/or experiences among its members.
6. TGG members shall notify the Chair if they intend to revoke their membership or must temporarily suspend their participation.
7. TGG members are expected to actively participate in TGG workplan activities..
8. Non-TGG members (guests, advisors, observers, etc.) will be invited to attend TGG meetings as appropriate and determined by the TGG.

Membership Roles & Offices

A Chair and Vice-Chair shall be designated by consensus of the TGG. These officers will be reaffirmed on an annual basis as determined during the annual meeting.

Members of the TGG will be encouraged to participate on standing EE/EN governance and workgroups, and will report back to the TGG.

The Project Administrator shall attend TGG meetings for the purposes of coordination and note-taking, however, the Project Administrator shall not be considered a formal member of the TGG.

Article IV: Roles & Responsibilities

All project administration responsibilities, including completion of deliverables outlined in the EPA cooperative agreement work plan, will fall to the Project Administrator.

To the extent possible, the TGG will work with the Project Administrator to ensure fulfillment of tasks outlined in both the EPA cooperative agreement work plan and the TGG Annual Work Plan. The TGG will provide feedback and guidance on the development of the EPA cooperative agreement work plan as needed.

The TGG will develop the TGG Annual Work Plan to outline assignments and timelines of the anticipated activities for the year. The TGG Annual Work Plan will be set during the annual meeting and updated or revised as needed. The TGG Annual Work Plan is separate from the EPA cooperative agreement work plan, and will be developed under consideration of the EPA cooperative agreement work plan to avoid possible conflicts or negative impacts with expected

outcomes. The Project Administrator will provide support to the TGG Annual Work Plan elements where appropriate and as time and resources allows. The TGG Chair:

- shall facilitate all TGG meetings;
- shall report back to the TGG on any actions taken outside of meeting proceedings;
- serves as the primary point of contact for the TGG with outside entities and the Project Administrator;
- has signatory authority on behalf of the TGG.

The TGG Vice-Chair shall fulfill the responsibilities of the Chair in the event of the Chair's absence or at the request of the Chair.

Article V: Charter Approval

We, the members of the TGG, hereby approve the above articles of this Charter through consensus of the members present, on November 8, 2019.

Frank Harjo, Muscogee (Creek) Nation, TGG Chair

April Hathcoat, Cherokee Nation

Lauren Fox, Pamunkey Indian Tribe

Lisa Gover, Campo Band of Mission Indians

Bruce Jones, Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission, TGG Vice-Chair

Angie Reed, Penobscot Indian Nation

Linda Rosas-Bill, Habematolel Pomo of Upper Lake

BryAnna Vaughan, Bishop Paiute Tribe

Darold Wallick, Pala Band of Mission Indians