

The background of the slide is a scenic photograph of a mountain valley. In the foreground, there are several tall, green evergreen trees. In the middle ground, a river flows through the valley. In the background, there are more mountains under a clear blue sky.

Tribal Science Council History

TSC Fall Business Meeting

Tulsa, OK

December 6-8, 2011

Tribal Science Council (TSC)

- Formed in 1999 at the request of the National Tribal Caucus in partnership with tribal representatives to integrate Agency and Tribal interests concerning environmental science issues
- Provides a cross-Agency forum for Tribal and EPA scientists to discuss national tribal science issues
- Seeks to increase tribal involvement in EPA's scientific activities, building bridges between Tribal and Agency programs by focusing on priority tribal science issues

Mission of the TSC

“In a manner consistent with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Indian Policy and trust responsibility, the mission of the Tribal Science Council is to provide a forum for the interaction between Tribal and Agency representatives of mutual benefit and responsibility to work collaboratively on environmental science issues.”





Who is the TSC?



- **Members include one representative from each:**
 - Region with federally recognized tribes, plus a representative from the Alaska Native communities
 - Program Office and Regional Office
- **Current co-chairs**
 - Jeff Mears, Oneida Tribe of Indians of Wisconsin, Region 5
 - Theodore (Ted) Coopwood, EPA Office of Children's Health Protection

What makes us unique?

- Our collaborative approach to solving priority tribal environmental science issues
 - EPA and Tribal Caucuses
 - Tribally centered approach
 - Tribal Science Priorities that broadly align with National Tribal Caucus and Agency activities and interests
 - Coordination with the NTC to integrate priorities into the Agency's annual planning and budget process
 - Support for partnership activities and leverage of resources for tribal-specific projects



Goals of the TSC

- Develop a better understanding of the priority science issues for tribes across the nation and EPA's ability to systematically and formally address these issues
- Reach consensus on collaborative approaches for forming sustainable solutions
- Promote partnerships between Tribal and EPA scientists in the development and application of sound science
- Share EPA scientific products or activities relevant to tribes' priority science issues
- Facilitate communication and coordination with other agencies and organizations to more effectively respond to issues



TSC Recent Accomplishments

- National Tribal Science Priorities Process that identified primary issues of concern:
 - Climate Change
 - Integration of Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK) in Environmental Science, Policy and Decision-Making
- 2010 National Tribal Science Forum
 - June 6-10, 2010 hosted by Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa and Chippewa Indians in Traverse City, MI
 - Theme: Mother Earth: Indigenous Knowledge and Science to Promote Positive Change
 - Designed to foster the sharing of knowledge and information about tribal environmental programs
 - Provided mechanism for EPA and Tribes to find common ground on complex environmental issues
- Tribal Science Webinar Series
 - TSC in partnership with EPA's National Center for Environmental Research designed the webinar series "Promoting environmental health in Native American communities" (July 2009 – December 2009)
 - Translated findings of Science To Achieve Results (STAR)-funded research on environmental health and exposure concerns in North American Native subsistence populations.
- Workshop: Advancing the Science of Cumulative Risk Assessment (July 2009, EPA Region 5 in Chicago, IL)
 - Tribal Session focused on cumulative risk from the perspective of holistic, place-based assessments considering tribal cultural practices, exposure to chemicals, dietary data collection and spiritual health of the community
 - Workshop provided science, tools and approaches that may inform and aid EPA decision makers



Questions?

