U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region 9
Guidelines for Asset Protection for
Drinking Water, Source Water Assessment & Wastewater Programs
Under the General Assistance Program (GAP) Program

Tribes may use General Assistance Program (GAP) funds to plan, develop, and "test drive" drinking water, source water assessment and wastewater programs. The "test drive" period can take one to three years to complete. At the end of the "test drive" period, a tribe must have established sustainable drinking water, source water assessment and/or wastewater program(s), with the technical, financial and managerial capacity to properly operate and maintain the program(s) over time. GAP cannot fund drinking water, source water assessment, and wastewater activities on a long term basis, because "program implementation" is not eligible for GAP funding.

Funds awarded to individual tribes for these activities have ranged from $3,000 to $40,000.
EPA encourages tribal collaborative projects which facilitate asset protection activities, such as tribes sharing a certified operator or working together to develop asset protection programs.
If a tribe requests funding for more than one program (drinking water, source water assessment or wastewater), each program must be in a separate work plan component. Do not combine drinking water, source water assessment and wastewater activities in the same work plan component.

Note: For the purpose of these guidelines, "initial" in the below list of eligible activities refers to one time activities to build capacity for a new system, new source, or new treatment method.

Drinking Water Asset Protection
A sustainable, well-run drinking water program includes the following characteristics (achieving these characteristics is the primary goal for this program):

- ***A capable manager or management (e.g., utility board).***
- ***A dedicated budget and funding to support operations & maintenance (O&M).***
- ***The operational skills to conduct proper O&M in compliance with the Safe Drinking Water Act.***

Note that most training for managers, operators and water utility boards is available to Region 9 tribes for no cost and therefore not applicable for funding. However – training is an important component of building a sound and sustainable program and should be pursued concurrent with receiving GAP funding for this program. Additionally, since a large part of meeting the above goals involves meeting the multiple requirements of the federal Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA), proposals and work plans for this program must be coordinated with your Drinking Water (DW) Project Manager (see contact information below).

Sample activities, conducted for the purpose of program development, training and capacity building, may include:

1. As a training and capacity building task, conduct initial SDWA monitoring and reporting for your water system. As the specific requirements vary for each system, you must consult with your EPA DW Project Manager to determine what is needed for compliance. Also, the specific contaminants and monitoring frequencies will be determined through consultation with your EPA DW Project Manager. Any monitoring costs should be estimated based on this determination. (Deliverable: monitoring results, on schedule)
2. Operator Certification– the classes and tutoring are free, but GAP funds can pay for the initial study materials and exam registration fees. (Check with your EPA DW Project Manager to find out what level of certification your system requires). Note: Certification is only required of operators running systems

that employ disinfection. (Deliverables: documentation of exam registration, study materials receipts, certification numbers once certified)

3. As a training and capacity building task, preparation of an initial Consumer Confidence Report (CCR), in cases where one has never been completed. (Deliverable: Copy of the CCR and confirmation from DW Project Manager that task was completed on time)
4. As a training and capacity building task work with your EPA DW Project Manager in developing the initial Coliform Sample Siting Plan and related emergency procedures. (Deliverable: copy of DW Project Manager approved Sample Siting Plan completed by due date)
5. As a training and capacity building task prepare the initial Chemical Monitoring Waiver Application for submittal to EPA. (Consult with EPA DW Project Manager during this process and note that some waivers will require at least one set of baseline data). (Deliverable: confirmation of completed Waiver Application submitted to DW Project Manager by due date)
6. Initial registration for one membership to a professional DW organization that fosters profession development in the field of drinking water. (Deliverable: documentation of membership)
7. As a training and capacity building task develop the initial 5-year operating plan for the managerial and financial operational needs of your system. This plan should include:
   - an operations and maintenance plan specific to your system, including a preventive maintenance schedule (seek technical assistance as needed during this process).
   - "as built" drawings. If these drawings are not available, contract to have "as built" drawings for your water system completed. Consult with your EPA DW Project Manager or other technical assistance provider prior to beginning a procurement process to ensure quality deliverables. (Deliverable: statement asserting completion of "as built drawings", a copy of the table of contents)
   - Develop the initial long-term monitoring and reporting schedule for maintaining compliance with the SDWA and support annual budget estimates. (Deliverable: DW Project Manager approved Monitoring schedule)
   - develop initial policies and/or ordinances relative to good system management and oversight. (Deliverables: copies of signed and dated ordinances or policies)
   - conduct an initial rate study and develop an initial rate structure that will be responsive to meeting system operational costs. (Deliverables: rate study, tribal ordinance implementing rate structure, report of rate collection)

Again, coordination with the EPA DW Project Manager in developing your specific proposal and work plan is essential – please contact the appropriate DW Project Manager:

Southern and Central California
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Source Water Assessment Asset Protection

A sustainable well-run source water assessment program includes the following characteristics (achieving these characteristics is the primary goal of GAP funding for this program):

- A capable manager or management of the source water assessment program
- A dedicated budget and funding to support operations and maintenance (O&M)
- The operational skills to implement the source water assessment program in compliance with the Safe Drinking Water Act

Note that source water assessment training may be available through EPA to Region 9 tribes for no cost. Training is an important component of building a sound and sustainable program and should be pursued concurrent with receiving GAP funding for this program. Additionally, since a large part of meeting the above goals involves meeting the multiple requirements of the federal Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA), proposals and work plans for this program must be coordinated with your Source Water Assessment Project Officer (see contact information below).

Sample activities, conducted for the purpose of program development, training and capacity building, may include:

1. Developing an initial Source Water Assessment Program which may include the following four steps:
   a. Delineating source water areas around the drinking water source;
   b. Identifying potential sources of contamination that may impact the protection area;
   c. Determining the susceptibility of the identified potential sources of contamination to a drinking water source;
   d. Communicating the results to the served community.

(Deliverables: source water assessment delineation report, report of potential sources of contamination, outreach materials)

2. Develop and "test drive" Source Water Protection control measures, such as:
   a. As a training and capacity building task, development of the initial an Onsite Wastewater Treatment System (OWTS) Management Plan
      The purpose of an OWTS management plan is for the Tribe to establish appropriate management strategies to help minimize risks to drinking water sources resulting from OWTS failure. Generally, OWTS Management plans should include: locating and inventorying existing OWTS and relevant hydrogeologic conditions on the reservation, reviewing the location of all new OWTS construction prior to building, developing an OWTS operation and maintenance plan, and developing and incorporating OWTS management into reservation ordinances.
   b. Development of Initial Sourcewater Zoning Ordinances
      Sourcewater Ordinances should encompass several basic concepts in order to enable Tribes to protect source water on a scale that ensures protection of the whole recharge zone for that source water. Sourcewater Ordinances should have language specifying allowable and prohibited land uses within the source water protection area(s) as well as procedures for the review of proposed projects within a source water protection area to verify that the project is consistent with the ultimate goal of the ordinance. Sourcewater Ordinances should also describe the mechanisms for enforcement of the requirements of the ordinance, including penalties that may apply for failure to obey.
   c. Public Outreach
      Results from the delineation, potential contaminant source (PCS) inventory, and susceptibility analysis should be communicated to the Tribe's membership and community; public outreach is considered the last step of the development of a 4-step source water assessment program. Public outreach can be accomplished by inclusion of assessment results in the Tribe's Consumer Confidence Reports (CCR), at public meetings, in newsletters, postings at public buildings, as well as via radio announcements, and direct mailings. Public outreach methods such as these educate Tribal communities; increasing

awareness of potential threats to drinking water sources often becomes the foundation for the community's role in moving forward with efforts to protection of sources from identified threats.

d. Development of the Initial Sourcewater Contingency Plan

Tribes develop sourcewater contingency plans in order to establish up-to-date procedures and information necessary to utilize alternative water supply sources in the event of contamination or loss of existing drinking water sources (i.e., alternative water sources in the event of contamination). A sourcewater contingency plan should include: a summary of potential sources of contamination, emergency response procedures to address various emergency scenarios, alternative water supply options, priority water users and conservation measures, and a notification roster (i.e., list of contacts in the event of a contaminant spill).

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Community Wastewater System Asset Protection

A sustainable, well-run wastewater program includes the following characteristics; and achieving these characteristics is the primary goal of GAP funding for this program:

- a capable manager or management (e.g., utility board)
- a dedicated budget and funding to support operations & maintenance (O&M)
- the operational skills to conduct O&M in compliance with the Clean Water Act

Note that most training for managers, operators and water utility boards is available to Region 9 tribes for no cost and therefore not applicable for funding. However – training is an important component of building the capacity for a sound and sustainable wastewater program and should be pursued concurrent with receiving GAP funding for this program. Additionally, work plans for this program should be coordinated with your EPA Wastewater contact (see contact information below).

Sample activities, conducted for the purpose of program development, training and capacity building, and may include:

1. Obtaining Operator Certification – classes and tutoring are generally free, but GAP funds can pay for initial study materials and exam registration fees. (Deliverables: documentation of exam registration, study materials receipts, certification numbers)
2. As a training and capacity building task, conduct initial water quality monitoring as required by an EPA Clean Water Act National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit and initial monitoring for facilities without an NPDES permit to determine the effectiveness of treatment processes. For example, Community Sewer Lagoon Systems should be monitored to ensure that the lagoons are being properly maintained and functioning as they should.
3. As a training and capacity building task, develop an initial operations and maintenance plan specific to your waste water system which includes “as built” drawings. If “as built” drawings are not available, contract to have drawings completed for your specific infrastructure system. Consult with your EPA WW Project Manager or other technical assistance provider before procuring drawings to ensure quality deliverables. (Deliverable: documentation that “as-built” drawings were completed and statement asserting completion of operation and maintenance plan)
4. As a training and capacity building task, develop the initial 5-year operating plan for the managerial and financial operational needs of your system. (Deliverable: statement asserting completion with copy of table of contents provided)
5. As a training and capacity building task, develop initial policies and/or ordinances relative to good system management and oversight. (Deliverables: copies of signed and dated ordinances or policies)
6. As a training and capacity building task, conduct an initial rate study and develop a rate structure that will be responsive to meeting system operational costs and/or develop tribal capacity through establishing an energy management program for tribal water and wastewater utilities that could be initiated by an energy audit. For example, energy audits can often find no-cost operational, energy utility rate structure, and time

of use changes that can have an immediate positive impact on the tribal budget (especially at a utility that's never conducted an audit before). You may develop an initial energy management program and move towards energy independence by identifying renewable energy opportunities through power purchase agreements that would require no up-front capital from the tribe. (Deliverables: rate study, tribal ordinance implementing rate structure, report of rate collection, energy management plan)

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