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# SAFER DRINKING WATER PROGRAM

## 2022 Tribal Outreach Plan

California Native American Tribes (tribes) are sovereign governments that require a tribe-by-tribe approach for outreach and communication. To determine a tribe's drinking water needs, and to achieve both short and long-term drinking water solutions, Water Boards Tribal Affairs staff will implement a SAFER Tribal Outreach Plan as follows:

### SAFER Tribal Outreach Plan Approach

#### Outreach & Engagement

- **Inter-Agency Coordination.** Tribal Affairs staff will meet regularly with agencies like Department of Water Resources (DWR), Indian Health Services (IHS), and US Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) to identify, and prioritize solutions for, tribal water systems that have either, or both, urgent and long-term drinking water concerns and problems.
- **Tribal Government Engagement.** Tribal Affairs staff will meet with tribal governments to learn about their drinking water concerns and issues, and to identify their priority solutions. Tribal Affairs staff will meet with tribes who 1) directly contact our office or 2) are referred to the SAFER program for drinking water needs.
- **Outreach Methods.** Tribal Affairs staff will share information about tribal-specific opportunities for the SAFER program with all tribes through emails, letters, public workshops, and various types of media.

#### Tracking & Monitoring

- **Data.** Tribal Affairs staff will maintain an internal database of tribes and their drinking water needs, issues, priority solutions, and project statuses. The database will include information compiled, with permission, from coordinating government agencies and tribal governments.
- **Lists.** Tribal Affairs staff will maintain a list of tribes who are coordinating with the Water Board for their drinking water needs.

#### Evaluation and Reporting

- **Best Practices.** Tribal Affairs staff will track and monitor communications with tribes, ensuring that all communications with tribes follow the Tribal Liaison's best practices and are solution oriented.

- **Quarterly Reports.** Progress reports will be available online every 3 – 4 months and will include project updates, and trending drinking water concerns, issues, and solutions.

## SAFER Tribal Outreach Plan Steps

### Step 1 Solutions & Priorities

- Meet with USEPA and IHS monthly to coordinate data, prioritize which tribal water systems to outreach to, and collaborate tribal drinking water solutions.
- Tribal Affairs staff will contact tribes who are referred to the SAFER program, contact us directly, or who have been noted as at-risk for a failing water systems by agencies like Indian Health Services or EPA.
- Tribal Affairs staff will meet with the tribe to understand their drinking water needs and identify priorities and possible. Water Board staff will then support the ongoing coordination of drinking water solutions for the tribe.

### Step 2 Project Coordination (Ongoing)

Tribal Affairs staff will work directly with the tribe and specific Water Board departments and offices to understand the type of funding that is needed and will provide ongoing coordination and project planning support until the project is complete.

### Step 3 Technical Assistance and Funding Agreements

Tribal Affairs staff will support the coordination of technical assistance and funding agreements for each tribe's drinking water solution.

### Step 4 Project Implementation

Once the project implementation is underway and the technical assistance provider is confirmed, Tribal Affairs staff will continue to communication with, and provide project coordination support to the tribe and technical assistance provider, as needed.

### Step 5 Completion

- Once the project is completed Tribal Affairs staff will coordinate celebrations via events, social media, and other media.
- Tribal Affairs staff will coordinate program evaluations, exit-interviews, and reports.

## More Information

- Visit SAFER website at [waterboards.ca.gov/safer](http://waterboards.ca.gov/safer)
- Tribal Liaison Email: [Tribal-Liaison@waterboards.ca.gov](mailto:Tribal-Liaison@waterboards.ca.gov)
- Leave a voicemail message at (916) 445-5615

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