

NATIONAL TRIBAL ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH THINK TANK

Year 3, Meeting 1

Rapid City, SD

May 14-15, 2014

Meeting Notes and Highlights

Purpose and Overview

The May 2014 meeting provided Think Tank members an opportunity to develop an action plan for year three; identify strategies for partner outreach; develop a competency model for tribal cultural awareness training; and, capture lessons learned from the Think Tank for a publication. In addition, meeting three offered members an opportunity to learn about innovative efforts in the Great Plains region and network with other tribal environmental health practitioners.

OTA Update – Annabelle Allison, Associate Director for Tribal Affairs, NCEH/ATSDR

Year 2 of the Think Tank resulted in the completion of the Office of Tribal Affairs (OTA) Strategic Plan and development of 5 priority issue areas. Discussions with NCEH/ATSDR programs resulted in changes to the APPLETREE grant from ATSDR and a pilot project for with the Great Lakes Inter Tribal Epidemiology Center and the National Environmental Health Tracking Network. Moving forward, the OTA would like to develop a structure for capturing and evaluating the impacts of the Think Tank's work. Annabelle would like to increase awareness of the Think Tank's work among NCEH/ATSDR colleagues, promote the OTA strategic plan and sustainability for that office.

Evaluation Results - Overall, responses indicated members were happy with the Think Tank process. Suggestions included improving engagement on calls, and focusing on action, both of which will be addressed.

Outreach Materials – Chinyere Ekechi (NCEH/ATSDR Policy Office) presented a draft power point presentation and talking points developed to highlight the history and efforts of the Think Tank. When finalized, the documents will be used to share the work of the Think Tank with Tribal leaders and partners. Members provided input to refine the final version. APHA will share the final documents with the group.

TAC Discussion – Annabelle Allison

The [CDC Tribal Advisory Council \(TAC\)](#) will meet in August 2014 at the Grand Traverse Resort (Acme, Michigan). Click on the attached link for more information about the upcoming TAC meeting ([Tribal Support Unit website](#)) The TAC requested a presentation of the OTA Strategic Plan at that meeting and is interested in greater engagement with the Think Tank's activities. Specifically, the TAC would like more information about how the 5 Think Tank priorities were selected. Think Tank members discussed a variety of options for engaging with the TAC including: providing greater background about how the Think Tank was formed and how decision-making occurs; outlining how member communicate about Think Tank activities to their tribes; and explaining the benefit of including members with on-the-ground expertise; and distinguishing the Think Tank as a “workgroup,” rather than a consultation group. Ralph

McCullers, Tribal Environmental Director, Poarch Band of Creek Indians, suggested that tribal leaders be invited to attend part of the next in-person meeting for added transparency. Kristin Hill, Director, Great Lakes Inter-Tribal Epidemiology Center, also suggested that the discussion with the TAC be separate from the larger “leader to leader” meeting with CDC – perhaps a breakout or briefing session to encourage open dialogue. Members discussed strategies to improve communication about the Think Tank including outreach to tribal epidemiology centers and health boards and linking OTA priorities to local priorities.

Tribal Risk Assessment Group Discussion – *Susan Hanson*, Tribal Consultant, Shoshone Bannock Tribe

During the group updates, Susan shared that the Shoshone Bannock Tribe recently received a favorable ruling allowing the Tribe to regulate a phosphate mine on their lands. The ruling found that the site had a “direct effect on...the health or welfare of the Tribe.” Susan stated that to get to this point, they had to insist on a Native American risk assessment using accurate data. Members were very interested in learning more and recommended that she publish something to share her experience and lessons learned about supporting the use of Native American risk assessments and tribal sovereignty. Other suggestions included creating recordings of folks working on similar issues at other sites (Navajo, Wind River, WY) to share. Several members volunteered to assist her if needed. [See news article about the ruling.](#)

Thunder Valley Community Development Corporation Presentation – *Andrew Catt-Iron Shell*

Thunder Valley Community Development Corporation began with a group of concerned youth with a renewed interest in reclaiming their culture and renewing life on the reservation. They created an organization (Thunder Valley CDC) and asked Nick Tilson to take on leadership. They applied for and received funding to develop a sustainable community from HUD and USDA and embarked on a 2-year process to create a plan. When complete, Thunder Valley CDC will provide affordable, sustainably-designed homes for over 100 families, youth shelters, and mixed-use areas, creating a resilient community. President Obama recently highlighted their work, which is also an example of tribal sovereignty. The next steps include securing funding to break ground. They are also looking financing and tax issues to make homes as affordable as possible and to support long-term infrastructure needs. This work not only provides affordable housing, but will improve health by providing healthy home environments. Andrew asked that interested members share their story with others and support them on [Facebook](#) or [online](#).

Lessons Learned – *Aila Hoss, Office of State, Tribal, Local and Territorial Support*

Aila is coordinating OTA’s draft publication describing the successful model of the National Tribal Environmental Health Think Tank and highlighting lessons learned. Members provided additional insights about elements that contributed to the Think Tank’s success:

- Passionate leadership and members
- Personal connections among members
- Providing a “safe place” for open discussion
- Thoughtful election of participants; members and entrenched in these issues and are not political appointees

- Clear goals and intended outcomes and deliverables
- Genuine collaboration and engagement

Members also debated who should “author” the final paper and how it should be published. Ideas included a handbook, a publication in tribal magazines, or creating a companion piece. Additional review and discussion will occur on an upcoming Think Tank call to refine the paper, add examples and determine the path for publication. Another suggestion that came up during this discussion was to consider developing training for new tribal leaders around environmental public health.

Working with Tribal Governments Course for Partners – Annabelle Allison

In year 3, The Think Tank has been asked to conduct training for partners based on the *Working Effectively with Tribal Governments* course that the OTA conducts for federal employees. Annabelle presented an overview of the current course content and asked members to identify the core elements to include for partners and important messages to convey. The following were proposed for inclusion in a partners’ pilot course:

Cultural Awareness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exercise to engage participants and evoke emotional response (e.g. Blanket Exercise) • Opening prayer • Ask what they would like to learn
Concept of Sovereignty	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tribes have a unique relationship with federal government • Unlike other ethnic groups • Examples of current challenges to tribal sovereignty • Examples of successful exercise of sovereignty
Historical Context	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Examples of historical trauma • Frame historical trauma in public health terms – social determinants model • Laws and policies • Introduce IHS and services provided • Tie to current challenges and ongoing distrust of government (not just “historical”)
Working with Tribes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avoid “biggest bang for buck” approach when addressing health

	equity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Culture is health model • Build relationships • Be transparent • Like states/locals, tribes are different
Public Health Challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relationships with states • Data collection and sharing issues • Challenges with funding • Include a roundtable session asking folks to brainstorm around solutions
Next Steps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask partners to think about how to include tribes or incorporate tribal issues in resources, policies or communications • Continue to dialogue and build relationships
Evaluation	

Partner Outreach

Members were asked to brainstorm potential partners that they currently work with or would like to partner with, with a special focus on the five priority areas. Potential partners included federal programs or offices, NGOs, state agencies, regional agencies, tribal organizations, and academia (see Appendix B). Members discussed the potential role and purpose of the Think Tank in engaging partners and suggested a phased approach to outreach and linking it to planned year 3 activities.

Next Steps

For year 3, the Think Tank will focus on the following key activities:

- Supporting the write up of Susan’s work promoting sovereignty and use Native American risk assessments
- Creating and piloting a training course for partners
- Disseminating Think Tank communication packet to members
- Creating a video highlighting five priorities

Appendix A: Action Items

What	Who	When
APHA Think Tank Session - Booth?	APHA NTEH Think Tank Members	Nov 15-19, 2014 New Orleans, LA
Think Tank Meeting 3	APHA	Co-locate with APHA in New Orleans?
Include a “methods” section in the priority document outlining how priorities were selected	APHA NCEH/ATSDR Policy (Chinyere)	July 2014
Develop a partner “working effectively with tribal governments” course to pilot	APHA Partnership Council Representatives (Kristin, Ralph) NCEH/ATSDR OTA	October 2014
Call to discuss updated draft of process paper	CDC PHLP (Aila) NCEH/ATSDR OTA Think Tank Members	August 2014
Finalize process paper	NCEH/ATSDR OTA CDC PHLP (Aila)	September 2014
Finalize power point presentation and talking points	APHA NCEH/ATSDR Policy (Chinyere)	September 2014
Draft storyboard for digital storytelling of 5 priorities	OTA	October 2014

Appendix B: Partner List

Partners	Why?	How to use them
National		
National Conference of American Indians (NCAI)	Tribal membership Political clout	Resolutions To support remediation Outreach/visibility
National Tribal Operational Committee(NTOC) NTAA NTWC NTCC	Approach strategically Wants to partner with other national partners; CAUTION:trying to advocate that other orgs (tribal air, etc.) should not be able to negotiate on their own	
Association of State and Territorial Health Officials (ASTHO)		
National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO)		
American Public Health Association (APHA)		
National Museum of American Indian (NMAI)		
Pew Charitable Trusts	HIA support (Aaron Wernham) Food programs - numerous	
Council on Education of Public Health (CEPH)		
Association of Schools and Programs of Public Health (ASPPH)		
American Bar Association (ABA)		
Federal Bar Assoc (FBA)		
American health lawyers assoc		
Network for public health law		
National Occupational Safety and Health Association (NOSHA)		
National Indian Health Board (NIHB)		
Friends Committee on National Legislation	Quaker org, but have a tribal lobbyist	
MLK King Center		
National risk assessment workgroups (do some research to identify)		
National Association of Risk Managers (NARM)		
Episcopal Church/Lutheran Church in DC (joint person)	Working on enviro justice/racism topics	
Midwives assoc (check with Katsi)		
Federal		
CDC Tribal Advisory Council (TAC)		
NIH/NIEHS		
EPA American Indian Environmental Office (AIEO)	Approach strategically	
Regional		
Regional remedial project managers that work on NPL/Superfund sites	Training them on site specific issues	
Regional tribal epidemiology centers	Report to tribal leadership (where health board is connected to epi center) Better connection to local needs Create better environmental health data	Use bi-monthly calls as way to inform
United Southeastern Tribes (USET)	Cover a large area Ralph is a member	2-way data sharing
Western regional air partnership (WRAP) /	Jerilyn is partnering on a grant with them.	
Indian Health Service (IHS)	Regional level Have been involved in indoor air/outdoor air	Promote the good work they're doing in some

	quality testing, water testing, suicide prevention in great lakes region. Provide grants Some regions have limited resources	of the regions.
Bemidji Area Environmental Health Group		
States		
MN/WI Tracking Pls		
Alaska may have its own spreadsheet		
State Depts of Health		
County Health Depts <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All counties that the members work with 		
Dept of Natural Resources		
Tribal		
Great Lakes fish and wildlife service		
Fon du Lac tribal chairman	On White House Climate Change Task Force	
Bad river tribal chair	Very active in mining issues	
IHS Rhinelander		
Tribal EH staff (some tribes have robust EH programs/staff)		
Federal Assistance Advisory Council (AK)		
Great lakes border health initiative		
Great plains tribal health chairman		
Crib CA rural Indian health board		
Urban Indian health institute (Seattle)		
Albuquerque area Indian health board		
Phoenix area Indian health board		
Alaska native health board		
Northwest Portland area health board		
Midwest area Indian health board (new no infrastructure)		
Academia		
Auburn University (Ralph)		
University of MN SPH (Kristin)		
U of WI SPH (Kristin)		
U of MI SPH (Kristin)		
U of Milkwaukee (Kristin)		
Indiana University SPEA (Ralph)		
Purdue Env Justice Program (Rosemary)		
University of Alaska (Rosemary)		
Universities with tribal/indigenous law programs (Indiana, Michigan state, University of Arizona, William Mitchell College of Law)		
Native American law students assoc		

Appendix C: Participants

Think Tank Participants

Rosemary Ahtuangularauk
Inupiaq
Tribal Liaison, Alaska Wilderness League

Ramona Antone-Nez
Director, Navajo Epidemiology Center

Isaiah Brokenleg
Sicangu Lakota (Rose Bud Sioux)
Epidemiologist, Great Lakes Inter-Tribal Epidemiology Center

Jerilyn Church
Cheyenne River Sioux
Executive Director, Great Plains Tribal Chairmen's Health Board

Susan Hanson
Environmental Consultant, Shoshone-Bannock Tribe

Kristin Hill
Director, Great Lakes Inter-Tribal Epidemiology Center

Jennifer Irving
Oglala Sioux Tribe
Need Update

Ralph McCullers
Poarch Band of Creek Indians
Tribal Environmental Director, Poarch Band of Creek Indians

Syndi Smallwood
Environmental Policy & Management

Nelda Swan
Village of Kivalina

APHA Staff

Amanda Raziano
Program Manager, Center for Public Health Policy
American Public Health Association

Emma Din
Program Associate, Center for Public Health Policy

American Public Health Association

CDC NTEH/ATSDR Staff

Annabelle Allison

Associate Director for Tribal Affairs, Office of Tribal Affairs

National Center for Environmental Health/Agency for Toxic Substances & Disease Registry

Chinyere Ekechi

Public Health Analyst, Office of Policy, Planning and Evaluation

National Center for Environmental Health/Agency for Toxic Substances & Disease Registry

Montrece McNeill Ransom

Senior Public Health Analyst, Public Health Law Program

Centers for Disease Control & Prevention

Aila Hoss

Legal Analyst (ORISE Fellow), Public Health Law Program

Centers for Disease Control & Prevention

Presenters

Jerilyn Church

Cheyenne River Sioux

Executive Director, Great Plains Tribal Chairmen's Health Board

Andrew Catt-Iron Shell

Thunder Valley Community Development Corporation