

## TEC/WG Tribal Topic Group Conference Call September 24, 1998

The TEC/WG Tribal Topic Group held a conference call on September 24, 1998. Participants included Audrey Adamson (UETC), Kevin Blackwell (DOT), Kathleen Grassmeier (DOE/NV), Richard Halsaver (consultant), Robert Holden (NCAI), Judith Holm (DOE/NTPA), Wilda Portner (SAIC), Alex Thrower (UETC), and Elissa Turner (DOE/RW).

Two upcoming meetings were announced:

Elissa Turner reiterated that the State and Tribal Government Working Group (STGWG) meeting will convene in Charleston, SC, October 26-28. Topics of discussion will include the transport of nuclear materials and cultural resources. A tour of Savannah River will be held on October 26.

Robert Holden announced the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) will hold its National Indian Nuclear Waste Policy Committee Meeting October 20-21 in Myrtle Beach, SC. Proceedings will include an Intergovernmental Round Table on radioactive materials transportation and emergency response. Secretary Richardson has been invited to address the General Assembly.

Judith Holm led a discussion on the process for increasing participation in the Tribal Topic Group. She said she has been working with other DOE Field Offices with Tribal contacts and she would be meeting with Idaho soon. Ken Gray, Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation, has been added to the Working Group. Ms. Holm explained that this issue needs to go back to the TEC/WG membership for a closer look at the list of people recommended for Group membership. More Tribal representatives are needed. She indicated DOE will send out a letter and consult with existing Topic Group participants regarding potential new members. She also expressed the need to have a full roster of Topic Group members identified for the November conference call.

Next, Elissa Turner noted NRC will publish an Advanced Notice of Proposed Rulemaking on Prenotification. She will try to obtain a timetable for the action. Interest was expressed in having someone address the subject at the upcoming NCAI meeting.

Rail issues was the next topic. Kevin Blackwell facilitated the discussion, touching on the right of Tribes to inspect shipments and the degree of DOE involvement. DOE has asked RSPA for a legal opinion on the subject. A final draft is being worked on, with the possibility of something being issued in October, but definitely for the January TEC/WG meeting.

Judith Holm provided an update on the issue of Single Funding Assistance Programs for States and Tribes. Ms. Holm identified three options for consideration by the Transportation Senior Executive Forum:

- The single funding program is appropriate. Take current funding for emergency preparedness and combine into a cooperative agreement.
- Separate funding through line appropriation.
- Separate funding through program authority.

If one of the option gets a "go-ahead," DOE will sit down with affected parties and work the issue through the TEC/WG.

Protocols are being reviewed for consistency and a series of activities have been sent to the TEC/WG for review. A Protocol Topic Group will be established, and a link is being established on the TEC HomePage for membership comments. Kathleen Grassmeier suggested a letter of explanation accompany the Protocols for comment. An email will be sent to TEC/WG members concerning Protocols, and revised Protocols will be mailed for the January meeting. Meetings will be held through STGWG and other forums to inform people what is happening with this issue.

The State of New Mexico has a major program for consulting with Tribes on long range infrastructure for transportation planning, and a report has been developed. Katie Grassmeier suggested that the Topic Group look at this program from a national viewpoint. Robert Holden said he would check on the appropriations that have been issued.

Judith Holm announced that New Mexico is planning a Tribal Summit after the first of the year. She believes the Transportation Tribal Initiative should try to tap into that activity.