

Tribal Environmental Health

Our Goal: To protect public health and the environment within the lands, resources and communities of 271 federally-recognized Tribal governments in Region 10.

Background

There are 271 federally-recognized tribal governments in the Pacific Northwest and Alaska – more than 47% of the total number within the United States. Consistent with the Agency’s federal tribal trust responsibility and Indian Policy, Region 10 is responsible for helping tribes to develop their own tribally and culturally relevant environmental protection programs by providing extramural funding, technical assistance, and program delegation and primacy to the tribes. Environmental health challenges facing tribes in Region 10 are as complex and unique as the tribes themselves, and they include:

- food safety as it relates to subsistence resources
- basic wastewater needs, as well as drinking water system maintenance and compliance
- protection of tribal water quality and indoor air quality
- large numbers of solid and hazardous waste disposal sites on tribal lands.

The Focus of Our Efforts

Our Tribal Strategy emphasizes increasing the level of resources in each office committed to tribal work and strengthening tribal partnerships to accomplish the following objectives:

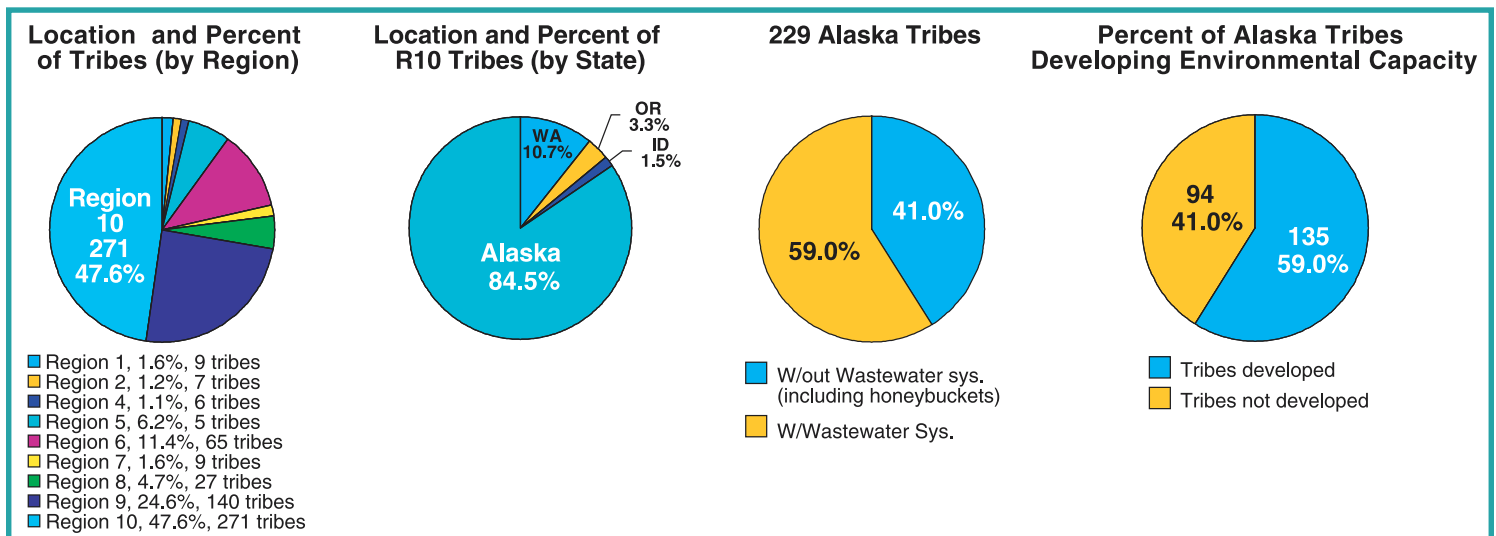
- *Capacity-Building* – Provide financial and technical assistance to create core environmental protection programs within each tribal government.
- *Direct Implementation* – Administer environmental protection programs until tribal capacity has been established.

Annually, Region 10 awards ~ \$15-20 million to tribes through the Indian GAP (General Assistance Program) to help build capacity within tribal governments.

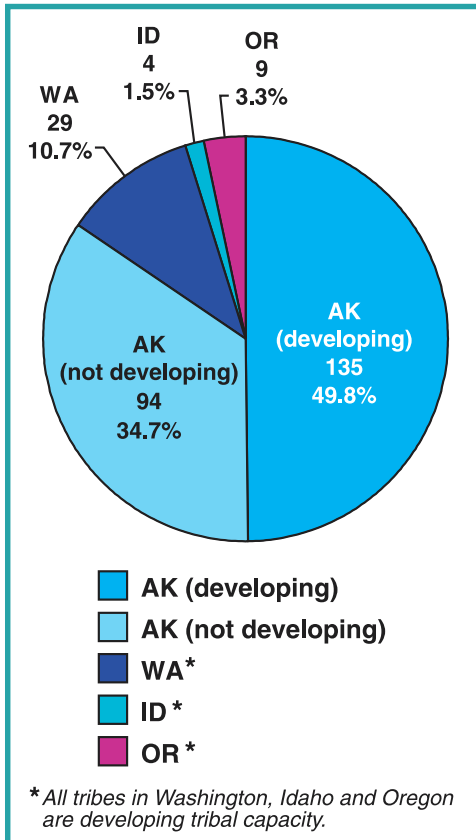
Environmental Outcomes by 2007

- ✓ All tribal governments in Region 10 are building general and media-specific capacity for implementing environmental protection programs for all tribal lands and resources.
- ✓ The “honey bucket” waste system used by Alaska tribes has been eliminated due to a 27% increase in closed/pipe sewage and sanitation systems.
- ✓ Region-wide technical assistance for tribal drinking water system compliance has been provided.
- ✓ Tribal baseline data on contaminants in regional subsistence foods has been compiled.
- ✓ Forty TAS (Treatment As State) tribal water quality programs and standards have been approved and implemented.
- ✓ Twenty TAS tribal air quality programs and standards have been approved and implemented.
- ✓ One hundred waste disposal sites in Alaska have been permitted and/or eliminated.

Region 10 Tribal Statistics



Percent of Tribes Developing Tribal Capacity



Environmental Indicators for Measuring Success

- Number of tribal governments with environmental programs and staff
- Number of newly built closed/pipe sewage and sanitation systems
- Number of approved TAS water quality and air quality programs/standards
- Number of waste disposal sites cleaned up
- Number of solid waste site permits

Key Actions: Next 1-2 Years

- Increase the number of GAP grants to eligible grantees by 15%.
- Support tribes in assessing risk for contamination of subsistence food sources.
- Enter into Direct Implementation Tribal Cooperative Agreement Authority (DITCA) for EPA direct program implementation responsibilities in Indian Country.
- Enter into Interagency Agreement (IAG) to address wastewater system needs for Alaska tribes.
- Complete a multi-media compliance assistance project for 9 tribes in Oregon and 4 tribes in Idaho.