



At a Glance

Catalyst for Improving the Environment

Why We Did This Review

At the suggestion of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Administrator, the Offices of Inspector General for EPA and the U.S. Department of the Interior (DOI) performed a joint audit to identify Tribal positive practices. The detailed joint report is provided separately. The purpose of this additional report is to provide recommendations to assist EPA in better managing Tribal environmental programs.

Background

There are more than 560 Federally recognized Tribes in the United States. Each Tribe is an individual, sovereign government unique in structure and culture. EPA funds tribal core environmental programs through the General Assistance Program.

For further information, contact the EPA Office of Congressional and Public Liaison at (202) 566-2391.

To view the full EPA report, click on the following link:
www.epa.gov/oig/reports/2007/20070503-2007-P-00022.pdf

To view the joint EPA-DOI report, click on the following link:
www.epa.gov/oig/reports/2007/20070503-2007-P-00022JT.pdf

Promoting Tribal Success in EPA Programs

What We Found

Tribes have made progress in overcoming barriers to successful management of environmental programs. Innovation is the key for Tribes to maximize the effectiveness of their programs and overcome barriers. The 14 visited Tribes provided examples of innovative practices, including:

Collaboration and Partnerships. Many of the successful projects result from efforts to foster good communication and positive relationships with others. Tribes work cooperatively with Federal agencies, other Tribes, State and local governments, educational institutions, and the private sector.

Education and Outreach. Tribes educate the community regarding environmental programs. Further, Tribes value community input and understand that project success often depends on community support.

Expanding Resources. Based on its size, capacity, and structure, each of the visited Tribes has its own processes for finding alternative sources of revenue to ensure sustainability of natural resource and environmental programs.

We based our findings and recommendations in this report on the information contained in the joint EPA-DOI report *Tribal Successes: Protecting the Environment and Natural Resources*. That report provides details on specific successful practices implemented by each of the 14 visited Tribes.

What We Recommend

To further help Tribes build on successful practices, we recommend that the EPA Assistant Administrator for Water:

- Work with Tribes to promote collaboration and partnerships.
- Identify and make available relevant education and outreach materials.
- Work with Tribes to identify economic resources and funding alternatives.

The Agency concurred with the recommendations and agreed that the practices outlined will lead to Tribal successes.