



Environmental Protection Department Newsletter



2025 Tribal Clean Water Act Workshop

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On May 19-23, 2025, the EPA Region 9 Water Division and the FPST co-sponsored the 2025 Region 9 Tribal Clean Water Act (CWA) Workshop at the Fallon Convention Center. The event opened with a Cultural Night at the CLC Gymnasium to welcome Region 9 visitors and showcase our local powwow styles as well as a local dance group, "Pudu Nugudu" (PLHS). Newe Tacos and local artisan beadwork were sold at the event.

The workshop included guidance to Region 9 Tribes with water quality programs and shared technical information, strategies, assessments, water quality, and prevention of polluted runoff on Tribal lands and watersheds. Field trips included the Tribal Wetlands and Pyramid Lake, fisheries, and Wetlands. Eighty-two participants from fifty-two Tribes were represented at the workshop.



Some Highlights from the 2025 Region 9 Tribal CWA Workshop



Fallon Paiute-Shoshone Tribal Wetlands Fieldtrip. FPST Environmental Specialists assist Dan Mosley with a lesson on macro invertebrates.



"A Successful Team Effort" Pictured Left to Right: Carmen Gonzalez (Presenter), Niko Anderson and Larry Maurin (EPA R9) Representatives, Keishia Tom, Ileana Henry, Richard Black, and Johnnie Iron Cloud. (FPST EPD staff)

Clean Water Act S-106 Program Update

By: Ileana Henry

The FPST Environmental Protection Dept. has been busy preparing a Treatment as State application to submit to the EPA. Upon granting FPST Treatment as State status, for CWA Sec303c, the Fallon Paiute-Shoshone Tribe will then be able to apply for Tribal Water Quality Standards, a key component of the Clean Water Act, which regulates the discharge of pollutants into the waters of the United States and sets water quality goals. These goals align with designated uses that the

Tribe deem important like: protecting and propagating fish, shellfish, and wildlife; recreation in and on the water; and public water supply. Additionally, tribes may designate uses related to cultural and traditional practices, and agricultural uses. These designated uses form the foundation for establishing water quality standards that protect the intended uses of tribal waters.

Protecting Our Waters: Updates from the Nonpoint Source Pollution Program

By: Nara Douglas

Nonpoint source (NPS) pollution continues to be a major environmental concern for our watershed. Unlike pollution from a single, identifiable source—like a pipe or factory—nonpoint source pollution comes from many different sources. It occurs when rainfall, snowmelt, or irrigation water moves over land, picking up pollutants and carrying them into rivers, lakes, wetlands, and groundwater.

Common sources include runoff from roads, agricultural areas, construction sites, and urban neighborhoods. Even storm water and irrigation return flows fall under this category, making it harder to manage and track.

Why Snowmelt Matters

We often focus on summer rainstorms when thinking about runoff, but snowmelt in early spring plays a major role too. Snow can absorb air pollutants like soot, nitrogen compounds, and heavy metals. When it melts, all of those contaminants are released at once into nearby waterways.

Winter also brings increased pollution from heating systems, vehicle use, and road treatments like salt and sand. These pollutants accumulate on roads and in snowbanks, then enter our watershed during the spring thaw. This results in a sudden spike in pollution that can harm water quality, wildlife, and aquatic habitats.

One of the most effective ways to combat NPS pollution is by using natural or constructed wetlands. These systems act like nature's filters—removing pollutants from the water as it flows through plants, soil, and microbial communities.

We're fortunate to have two key wetland areas at the bottom of our watershed: one on the FPST Reservation and another in the Stillwater National Wildlife Refuge. These wetlands help trap sediments, filter out nutrients, and improve overall water quality before it leaves the watershed.

Continuing Tamarisk Removal in Tribal Wetlands

This season, we will be retreating areas within our tribal wetlands where tamarisk (also known as salt cedar) was not fully eradicated during the initial removal efforts. Tamarisk is a highly invasive plant species

that poses serious threats to native ecosystems, especially in riparian and wetland environments like ours.

One of the challenges with tamarisk is its deep and extensive root system, which allows it to access underground water sources that many native plants cannot reach. Even when above-ground growth is removed, the plant can regrow from root fragments, making complete eradication difficult without follow-up treatments.

In addition to being hard to kill, tamarisk:

- Displaces native plants such as willows and cottonwoods by outcompeting them for water and sunlight.
- Consumes large amounts of groundwater, reducing the availability of water for wildlife and other plant species.
- Alters soil chemistry by excreting salt, making the soil less suitable for native vegetation.
- Increases wildfire risk due to its dense, woody growth.

Our retreatment efforts will focus on mechanical removal where necessary, followed by targeted herbicide application in compliance with tribal environmental safety standards. By controlling and eventually eliminating tamarisk, we aim to restore native plant communities, improve water availability, and support healthier wildlife habitats in our wetlands.








Jesse Marsh, Summer Youth, Keishia Tom and Ileana Henry (EPD staff)

Water Sampling in the Wetlands.

Air Quality Awareness: 9 Years of the AQI Flag Program

By: Nara Douglas

Since November 2017, the Air Quality Index (AQI) Flag Program has been active in our community marking its 8th year of helping us stay informed about the air we breathe every day. You'll find AQI flags flying at the FPST Environmental Department and the FPST Senior Center. Each morning, staff raise a color-coded flag based on the EPA's AQI system:

-  Green – Good
-  Yellow – Moderate
-  Orange – Unhealthy for Sensitive Groups
-  Red – Unhealthy
-  Purple – Very Unhealthy

This program continues to be a simple yet powerful tool for public health and environmental awareness. It empowers our community to make informed decisions—whether it's choosing when to exercise outdoors or planning community events.

Local Air Quality Snapshot

In our region, **ozone pollution** remains the primary concern. Thankfully, we've generally remained in the green zone (AQI 1–50), meaning our air is clean and safe most days. However, during wildfire season, that can quickly change.

Smoke from wildfires, even from hundreds of miles away in neighboring states, can drift into our area, increasing both ozone and fine particulate matter (PM2.5). These particles are small enough to enter the lungs and bloodstream, posing serious health risks, especially for sensitive groups.

Real-Time Air Monitoring with PurpleAir

To enhance local air quality awareness, we've recently installed new PurpleAir sensors at several key community locations:

- FPST Environmental Office
- FPST Senior Center
- CLC Gym
- FPST Administration Building
- Fox Peak Cinemas

These sensors provide real-time monitoring of PM2.5 levels that can negatively impact the health of community members. The data is free and publicly accessible through the PurpleAir Map, allowing community members to view current air conditions at any time from a phone or computer.



What to Do on Unhealthy Air Days

When air quality is expected to reach **Unhealthy (Code Red)** levels, "Action Days" may be declared. On these days, everyone—especially children, older adults, and people with asthma or heart conditions—should limit time spent outdoors and avoid strenuous activity.

Stay Informed, Stay Safe

Whether you're checking the daily AQI flag or viewing real-time data on the PurpleAir map, these tools help protect your health and support a safer, more informed community.

WWW.AIRNOW.GOV



The Air Quality Index Flag Program at the FPST Environmental Protection Department



FPST MOSQUITO FOGGING NOTICE

July 1, 2025

Mosquito control includes larviciding, which is the application of pesticides to kill mosquito larvae in aquatic habitats. Larviciding can help reduce the number of adult mosquitoes that bite, which can help protect against disease transmission. Weekly larvae monitoring and treatment is being conducted on the reservation during daylight hours.

Insecticide treatment for adult mosquitoes is also being implemented on all reservation sub-division streets and scattered home site areas. Mosquitos are generally fogged in the early morning or late evening hours, when temperature, wind speed and inversion are appropriate. This practice also reduces exposure to people and pollinating insects.

To keep the community informed, the Environmental Protection Department has developed a weekly fogging schedule for the mosquito season. Treatment times for a specific street or scattered home site are not possible. If the conditions are not ideal, the treatment will not be conducted and will be postponed to the next planned day. Fogging will also be conducted on weekends as needed.

WEEKLY MOSQUITO FOGGING SCHEDULE

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
As needed for Dawn and Dusk hours	School Bus Stops; Senior Center Dawn hours Eagle's Nest; Stillwater View; Spirit Winds Subdivisions Dusk hours	Scattered Home Site Areas; CLC, Housing, EM, Fitness Center Area Dusk hours	School Bus Stops; Senior Center Dawn hours Eagle's Nest; Stillwater View; Spirit Winds Subdivisions Dusk hours	Scattered Home Site Areas; CLC, Housing, EM, Fitness Center Area Dusk hours	School Bus Stops; Senior Center Dawn hours Eagle's Nest; Stillwater View; Spirit Winds Subdivisions Dusk hours	As needed for Dawn and Dusk hours

Please let us know if you have mosquito complaints or if you would like to be put on the no fogging list. If you need more information, please contact the FPST Environmental Protection Department at **775-423-0590**. The Mosquito Field Number is **775-493-1700**.

Thank you, FPST Environmental Protection Department



Climate Change in Our Community

By: Keishia Tom

We've all felt it- Summer days are getting hotter, rain doesn't come when it used to, and strong winds seem more frequent. These shifts aren't just weather quirks- they're signs of climate change, and they're already affecting our land, water, health, and everyday life!



For our community, climate change brings real challenges. It can increase utility bills during extreme heat, impact air quality, strain local water resources, and affect traditional plants and foods. But it also gives us a chance to plan ahead, protect what matters most, and make choices rooted in long-term care for each other and the environment.

Local leaders and departments are working to better understand what climate change means for our area. Right now, that means listening, learning, and preparing. No decisions are being made yet, but your voice matters in shaping what comes next.

What you Can do:

Start the conversation: Ask elders how the seasons used to feel or how water, plants, and wildlife have changed over time.

Stay informed: Check local alerts for heat advisories or poor air quality days, and help others, especially elders, to stay safe and cool.

Conserve Resources: Small changes like fixing leaks, planting drought tolerant plants, or turning off unused lights help in big ways.

Reduce waste: Repurpose items, sort recyclables, and try to limit single-use plastics.

Show up: Participate in community meetings, surveys, or discussions about the environment. Your insight helps shape the future.

Caring for our land is part of who we are. Even small steps taken together can strengthen the health, safety, and resilience of our community.

Exploring Solar for Our Community

By: Keishia Tom

Our area gets a lot of sun and that sunshine could help us power homes, save money, and create more control over our energy use. That's why many in the community are starting to look into solar energy. Solar energy uses sunlight to generate electricity. It can help lower monthly electric bills, reduce harmful emissions, and support long-term energy independence. It's not just for cities or big buildings. Solar can work for everyday homes too! While nothing is in place yet, early conversations are happening about how solar energy could benefit our area in the future. Understanding our options now means we'll be ready when opportunities come. Ways to get involved include:

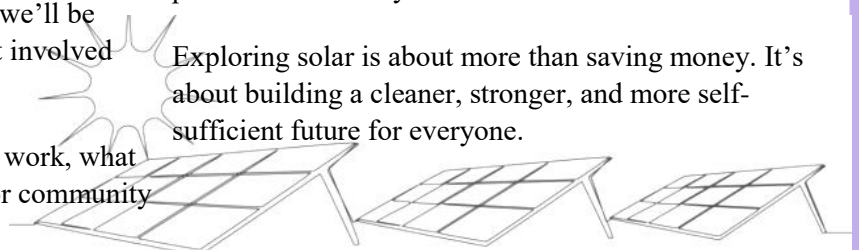
Learn the basics: Research how solar panels work, what they cost and how they might fit on homes or community building.

Pay attention to your energy use: Start tracking your monthly electric bill to get a sense of how much energy your household utilizes.

Join the conversation: If you're curious about solar or would like to see it in the community, speak up and share your interest.

Think long-term: Solar is an investment in clean, local energy. It's also a chance to create jobs and learning opportunities for our youth.

Exploring solar is about more than saving money. It's about building a cleaner, stronger, and more self-sufficient future for everyone.



By: Ileana Henry

Volkswagen Settlement Diesel Emission Mitigation Projects

“The Tribal Volkswagen (VW) Settlement was established as part of the larger settlement from the VW emissions scandal, in which Volkswagen admitted to installing defeat devices in diesel vehicles to cheat U.S. emissions tests. A portion of the settlement funds—\$55 million—was allocated specifically to federally recognized Native American tribes to address the resulting environmental harm.” -EPA.GOV

In 2020, the FPST Environmental Protection Department applied to be a beneficiary to participate in a third funding cycle for the VW Diesel Emissions Environmental Mitigation Trust. On June 29th, 2020, Volkswagen allocated \$163,715 to Fallon Paiute-Shoshone Tribe to replace the Public Works Roll Off diesel truck. A 2000 International F-4900 Roll Off truck was replaced with a new 2023 International Roll Off Truck, with the help of ARPA program funds (\$63,561.50).

In addition, the Tribe had one more diesel truck that was eligible to be replaced. When the fourth funding cycle came out in 2021, the department applied to replace a 1994 International 4800 fire diesel truck and was allocated \$142,294. On January 29th, 2024, the Tribe purchased a new 2022 diesel Skeeter Brush Truck Dodge Ram5500, with the assistance of \$5,867 in Tribal funding.

The guidelines state that the ‘old dirty diesels’ had to be decommissioned. Specifically, a three-inch hole cut in the engine block and vehicle frame cut in half.

DERA Project

The picture on the right shows Richard accepting keys to the new Roll Off truck but, you can also see a bit of our new VAC truck. In cooperation with the Tribal Public Works department, we were able to swap out a 2004 L7500 Sterling Pump/Vac Truck for a new 2023 Pump/Vac Truck by utilizing the Tribal EPA Diesel Emission Reduction Act Grant.

The Tribe was awarded \$641,764, through the EPA Diesel Emission Reduction Act (DERA) Grant Program in 2023.



1994 Fire Truck



2022 Replacement Truck



2000 Roll Off



2023 Replacement Truck

Benefits of Composting

Composting offers myriad **environmental, economic, and social benefits**.

Composting diverts organic material from landfills and incinerators, which can reduce:

- **Greenhouse gas emissions**, particularly **methane**;
- **Disposal costs** associated with landfilling and incineration; and
- The need for expansion or construction of new landfills and incinerators, which have **harmful public health effects** and are disproportionately sited in low-income communities and communities of color.

By: Richard Black



The compost industry overall also sustains **more jobs** than landfilling or incineration on a per-ton basis.

Introducing our 2025 Summer Youth Worker

JESSE

My name is Jesse Sy Marsh and I am a currently working as a Summer Youth Worker with the ITCN program. I am a Sophomore (Class of 2028) and I attend Churchill County High School. My mom is Sarah A. Marsh and my Grandmother is Mary L. Christy. I recently switched schools and will be attending Pyramid Lake Jr/Sr. High School to play ball over there. I love the sport of basketball! On my free time, I enjoy hanging out with friends at the gym and help my Grandma around the house or anything else she needs me to do. Working for Environmental has taught me some office skills. I am in charge of the front desk. I answer and transfer all calls, check the mail and post flyers. I recently went Water Sampling with Ileana and Keisha. It was nice to be in nature. I also rode with Edwin to decommission an old fire truck and also rode in the new brush truck!

