

CalEPA Tribal Advisory Committee

April - August 2024: DTSC Report

The Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) invites collaboration and input of California's Native American Tribes because engagement with these Tribes provides DTSC with critical information to protect Tribal Cultural Resources throughout the State. We value the Tribes' traditional ecological knowledge as part of protecting the people of California.

Below is list of consultations and/or meetings with Tribal leaders. Following that list is a description of some of the more far-reaching or recognized DTSC projects with Tribal engagement.

Initiated and Ongoing Consultations during Quarters 2 and 3

DTSC staff have met with Tribal representatives on several projects involving DTSC oversight. Newly initiated consultations include the Kelleher Cleaners (located in Southern California), Shamrock Cleaners (Southern California), and Georgia-Pacific Corporation (Fort Bragg). DTSC continues consultations with tribes affiliated with the Santa Susana Field Laboratory. DTSC staff is coordinating with tribes to assure that tribal cultural monitors are present when ground disturbing activities occur and that Tribal Government representatives provide input on how to preserve tribal cultural resources at these sites.

Cleanup in Vulnerable Communities Initiative (CVCI)

DTSC's CVCI program promotes the cleanup of vulnerable communities and areas that suffer from multiple sources of contamination. The CVCI's Discovery and Enforcement (D&E) team investigates former and current drycleaning site locations for contamination and works to cleanup those identified impacted properties. The following are current and on-going CVCI/D & E projects with open lines of communication or direct Tribal Government interests.

Ongoing CVCI Project Coordination during Quarter 3

For the sites and cities listed below, the tribal communication process is being conducted and tribes have responded with requests to consult on the project activities.

- Quality Cleaners (Stockton)
- Sloan's Cleaners (Los Angeles)
- Galindos Cleaners (Compton)
- Galindos Cleaners 2 (Compton)
- Greenleaf Center Cleaners Laundry (Compton)
- Lords Dry Cleaners (San Bernardino)
- Paul's Cleaners (San Bernardino)
- Little Cleaners (Long Beach)
- Perth Cleaners (Anaheim)
- Quick Cleaners (Long Beach)
- Special Cleaners & Laundry (Long Beach)
- The Ritz Cleaners (Anaheim)
- Berkeley Santa Fe Trackbed to Park (Berkeley)

The following are sites where Tribes have responded with requests for additional information on project activities but have not have formally requested consultation. These project sites still have the potential for consultation after DTSC tribal coordinators meet with Tribal representatives. A determination can be made by the Tribal governments once additional information is provided.

- Wash World (Oakland)
- Snow Cleaners Inc (Stockton)
- Dicks Cleaners (Bell Gardens)
- Shamrock Cleaners (Bell Gardens)
- Esquire Quality Cleaners (Los Angeles)
- Triplett Cleaners (Los Angeles)
- Vermont Cleaners (Los Angeles)
- Fay Cleaners (Long Beach)

Technical Assistance Grant (TAG) Program

DTSC offers grants through CVCI to assist with addressing environmental investigations and cleanups at properties throughout California. DTSC's goal is to empower Tribal governments and others to facilitate the return of blighted and underutilized properties to safe and productive use.

One of the grant programs, the Technical Assistance Grant (TAG), provides funds ranging from \$40,000 to \$150,000 to eligible communities to hire independent Technical Advisors with the goal to effectively communicate technical information to communities so they can become more involved and informed about Response Actions (cleanup sites). Response Actions include activities performed to address a release or potential release of contamination at a property under DTSC oversight. A map of all sites that are under DTSC's oversight that are eligible for TAG funding can be found at the following webpage ([Link to TAG mapping tool](#)). A Technical Advisor (TA) is a person who will provide the grantee with an unbiased, independent review of Cleanup Site-related information.

Tribes, regardless of federal recognition, that are culturally, regionally, or traditionally affiliated with lands or resources of California, are eligible for this funding opportunity. Any interested applicants can request additional application assistance support to answer any grant application questions and provide direction on the process at the following email: tag@cclr.org. Or can reach out to the Environmental Justice and Tribal Affairs program: TribalAffairs@dtsc.ca.gov.

Program Update and Priorities

The Environmental Justice and Tribal Affairs (EJTA) program at DTSC has hired two additional staff members to increase its capacity to coordinate and communicate with Tribal Governments on DTSC's projects and initiatives. The Tribal Affairs Unit is housed in the Office of Environmental Equity. There is a clear commitment from our leadership that DTSC will respect and honor the Tribal governments as sovereign nations. In doing so, it is a primary goal of the EJTA program to become more proactively involved with Tribal Governments and facilitating their input and concerns on projects that have the potential for impacting tribal cultural resources. Our new staff formation will help the EJTA program involve Tribal input as program initiatives are being developed to ensure that concerns are addressed.

Santa Susana Field Laboratory (SSFL) Project – Simi Valley, CA

This is a very visible project with Tribal interest from several different Tribes. SSFL is located on ancestral lands for many Tribes. DTSC Tribal Liaison and Tribal Affairs staff continue with on-going communications regarding program stages. There is

significant involvement with the Responsible Parties and the Sacred Sites Council. The Tribal Affairs staff continue to be available for the tribes to discuss concerns with the activities taking place.

The next step in the project includes the drafting of remediation documents by the parties responsible for the cleanup of soil and groundwater: The Boeing Company (Boeing), The Department of Energy (DOE) and National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA). Groundwater Corrective Measures Studies will be conducted by the responsible parties. Soil cleanup plans will be presented by DOE and NASA, while Boeing will conduct a soil corrective measures study. In an effort to memorialize the process of determining culturally significant sites and resources, and how to work with Tribal governments to protect them, DTSC's Tribal Liaison, EJTA Supervisor and project staff are arranging individual meetings to incorporate recommendations into DTSC's decision-making process.

Priorities for Next Quarter

- Commitment to proactively engage and work with Tribal governments.
- Involvement of Tribal representatives and monitors for the various CVCI programs.
- Development of a public education program for Tribes regarding groundwater mitigations for Santa Susana in preparation.
- Communicate activities in the SSFL project where cleanup is occurring and inviting Tribal governments to share their comments or concerns.