



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20460

OCT 29 2021

THE ADMINISTRATOR

The Honorable Gerald Wagner
Chair
National Tribal Caucus
P.O. Box 2029
Browning, Montana 59417

Dear Mr. Wagner:

I would like to convey to you how much I appreciated the opportunity to serve as co-chair of the 2021 National Tribal Operations Committee meeting alongside you at my first NTOC meeting, and I am grateful for the participation from the National Tribal Caucus. I was deeply moved by the discussions and found it quite productive and meaningful to hear the NTC's input on the EPA's work and priorities. The annual NTOC meeting is a critical opportunity for direct engagement between tribes and the EPA's leadership regarding the agency's tribal program planning and implementation.

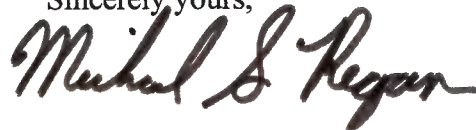
The reconvening of NTOC for the first time in more than two years furthered the promise of the Biden-Harris Administration to include tribal voices in policy deliberations that affect tribal communities. The 2021 NTOC meeting established a firm foundation for continued collaboration to achieve improved federal and tribal partnerships, advance environmental justice, address climate change as well as other goals of the Biden-Harris Administration. I look forward to building on this foundation and co-hosting the annual NTOC meeting in the years to come.

The EPA's senior leadership was very pleased to receive feedback from the NTC on the successes and challenges of the EPA's tribal program. I was especially proud to stand with you and reaffirm the 1984 Indian Policy. It was important to hear the NTC's perspectives on the 1984 Indian Policy and understand that consistent implementation of the policy is the ultimate goal. I also appreciated sharing the EPA's program priorities and the latest budget information. The discussion on NTC's work with the EPA tribal partnership groups was educational and responsive to questions I had posed in our June 2021 meeting. Unfortunately, I was pulled away from the meeting, but was grateful that EPA Deputy Administrator Janet McCabe was able to represent me. She expressed her appreciation for hearing the NTC's perspectives on multimedia, climate-change impacts, which were informative and compelling. She also appreciated the important discussion between NTC and EPA leadership on tribal program implementation flexibilities. I have enclosed a summary of the meeting notes that Jane Nishida, assistant administrator for the Office of International and Tribal Affairs, shared with the EPA's senior leadership after the meeting concluded.

I am looking forward to meeting with you again in 2022 – hopefully in person – to continue these important discussions. In particular, I am eager to hear more about specific NTC and tribal expert recommendations regarding the implementation of the EPA’s tribal program and other nationwide agency actions that would affect tribal nations, such as program office rulemakings. My suggestion is that the NTC identify strategic priorities for the EPA’s media program offices for the next year and recommend actionable topics to be considered by the EPA’s senior leadership; we can include this in our discussion during the 2022 NTOC meeting. Given the recent discussion during the NTOC meeting on “What is Working,” engaging and working closely with the EPA’s tribal partnership groups could be a great, useful tool to identify these recommendations and feedback on specific actions or decisions. The EPA tribal program staff can assist you with this.

In the meantime, you have my very best wishes for continued success.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Michael S. Regan". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Michael S. Regan

Enclosure