

Tools for Case Teams Developing Tribal Service Loss Claims

During three in-person listening sessions and one webinar conducted in 2015 & 2016 with tribal members working on Natural Resource Damage Assessment and Restoration (NRDAR) cases, participants offered a wide range of tools and methods they had used during the NRDAR process. The Department's Office of Restoration and Damage Assessment (ORDA) is making this info available for each case team to evaluate in the context of their unique case needs. These tools and methods may be potentially useful for case teams developing tribal service loss claims; however, it is not mandatory for case teams to use these tools and methods. Use of these tools in a NRDAR does not guarantee outcomes regarding funding decisions or damages recoveries.

- Mapping:
 - Density mapping: Map various traditional activities and overlay on the maps of contamination and impact/injury. This may be helpful to link natural resource injuries and cultural impact.
 - General maps: Other agencies (e.g., the US Forest Service) use maps to indicate locations of culturally important sites, but not specifically, just in broad area generalizations to protect confidentiality.
- Surveys/interviews/resource indices:
 - Cultural resource index: Tribal elders describe the cultural resources they remember from the time they were young, showing the difference in resources then and now. An index may help inform trustees about resource conditions but for contamination.
 - Conjoint choice experiments: Tribal elders may provide relevant information for use in Habitat Equivalency Analysis and Resource Equivalency Analysis or other models, while reducing the need for tribes to divulge sensitive information.
 - Surveys/cultural matrix: Staff may collect information about the cultural importance of tribal resources, the presence or absence of resources, tribal members' concerns about a resource, why the resource was used, etc. This info may show the importance of resources and inform restoration planning.
 - Interviews, door-to-door visits, tribal member meetings: This is another potential method to collect information about the existence and use of resources in the past and the cultural impact resulting from the loss of the resources.
- Ethnographic work: Tribes may utilize Traditional Ecological Knowledge and identify a link to tribal life ways.
- Cultural activities videos: Videos may be an effective medium to document tribal lifeways that have been impacted due to contamination.
- Tribal standards: Tribes may have existing tribal standards that may apply in the context of NRDAR and are appropriately protective for tribal cultural practices and lifestyles.
- Strong co-trustee relationships: Building good relationships among co-trustees may bring many benefits including: ease in sharing info, greater understanding, alliances to advocate for tribal needs, development of cooperative assessment activities and joint restoration planning. Continuity of staff is important in developing and maintaining these relationships.
- For more info about the listening sessions and/or the tools listed, please contact ORDA at doinrdar@ios.doi.gov. Additional info related to NRDAR Tribal Cultural Resources is also available here: <https://www.doi.gov/ppa/nrdar-tribal-cultural-resources-project>.