

# 2026 Tribal Public Health Emergency Preparedness Conference



**Draft Agenda, subject to change. revised 3/27/26**

## Day 1: Monday, May 4, 2026

7:00 <sub>AM</sub> - 8:00 <sub>AM</sub>	Pre-Conference Training Registration	
	General Room	Breakout Room A
8:00 <sub>AM</sub> - 12:00 <sub>PM</sub>	FFAST Training AM Session	Mass Fatality & Reunification Training AM Session
12:00 <sub>PM</sub> - 1:00 <sub>PM</sub>	Lunch Break	
1:00 <sub>PM</sub> - 5:00 <sub>PM</sub>	FFAST Training PM Session	Mass Fatality & Reunification PM Session

## Day 2: Tuesday, May 5, 2026

	General Room	Breakout Room A
8:00 <sub>AM</sub> - 12:00 <sub>PM</sub>	FFAST Training AM Session	Mass Fatality & Reunification Training AM Session
12:00 <sub>PM</sub> - 1:00 <sub>PM</sub>	Lunch Break	
1:00 <sub>PM</sub> - 5:00 <sub>PM</sub>	FFAST Training PM Session	Mass Fatality & Reunification Training PM Session
3:00 <sub>PM</sub> - 5:00 <sub>PM</sub>	General Conference Registration - Pre-Function Area	

## Day 3: Wednesday, May 6, 2026

7:00 <sub>AM</sub> - 9:00 <sub>AM</sub>	General Conference Registration
8:00 <sub>AM</sub> - 9:00 <sub>AM</sub>	Buffet Breakfast - Pre-Function Area
9:00 <sub>AM</sub> - 9:30 <sub>AM</sub>	<p><b>Welcome and Opening</b> - <i>Nicole Smith, Senior Biostatistician, NPAIHB</i>  <i>Prayer: Pearl Capoeman-Baller, Quinault Elder</i>  <i>Posting of the Colors: Color Guard, Drum Group</i>  <i>Tribal Welcome: Quinault Indian Nation</i></p>
<p><b>Session 1.1</b>            9:30<sub>AM</sub> - 10:15<sub>AM</sub></p>	<p><b>Lessons Learned from the Unexpected: An All-Hazards Approach</b>  <i>Daniel Ravenel, Emergency Management Manager, Quinault Indian Nation</i>  <i>Elyse Kelsey, WA Sea Grant Fellowship</i>  <i>Desiree Markishtum, Emergency Coordinator, Quinault Indian Nation</i></p>
<p><b>Session 1.2</b>            10:15<sub>AM</sub> - 11:00<sub>AM</sub></p>	<p><b>The Unseen Emergency: Environmental Health Threats That Become Public Health Crises</b>  <i>Brian Fullen, EHS Officer, Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation</i></p>

# 2026 Tribal Public Health Emergency Preparedness Conference



## Day 3: Wednesday, May 6, 2026 (continued)

	General Room	Breakout Room A	Breakout Room B
<b>Session 2</b> 11:05 <sub>AM</sub> - 11:45 <sub>AM</sub>	<b>Part 1: Preventing Foodborne Outbreaks at Temporary Events</b>  <i>Tia Skerbeck, Councilwoman, Lower Elwha Klallam Tribe; Ryan Sealy, Environmental Health Scientist, NPAIHB; Melino Gianotti, Emergency Coordinator, NPAIHB; Faith Turk, Environmental Public Health Coordinator, AIHC</i>	<b>Applying High-Resolution LiDAR in Emergency Management for the Nez Perce Tribe</b>  <i>Brent Lloyd, GIS Analyst, Nez Perce Tribe</i>	<b>Strengthening Tribal Emergency Response: AMBER Alert Implementation in Indian Country</b>  <i>Amy Hood-Schwindt, Associate, NCJTC at Fox Valley Technical College</i>
<b>Session 3</b> 11:50 <sub>AM</sub> - 12:30 <sub>PM</sub>	<b>Part 2: Coordination and Communication During Foodborne Illness Outbreaks</b>  <i>CDR Christopher Fish, Director, Division of Environmental Health Services, Portland Area IHS</i>	<b>Bridging the Gap: Connecting Communities to Critical Resources During Emergencies</b>  <i>Jessica Wilkinson, Medical Logistics Supervisor, WA State Department of Health</i>	<b>The Missing and Endangered Persons (MEP) Alert: A National Indigenous-Led Solution to Protect Our People</b>  <i>Brian Wadsworth, Chief Operating Officer, Native Public Media</i>
12:30 <sub>PM</sub> - 1:30 <sub>PM</sub>	Buffet Lunch - Pre-Function Area		
<b>Session 4</b> 1:30 <sub>PM</sub> - 3:00 <sub>PM</sub>	<b>Active Shooters Training: How to Barricade and Secure Your Doors &amp; Windows &amp; Plan Your Escape Route</b>  <i>Dan Martinez &amp; Wymon Harry, Emergency Management Department, Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs</i>	<b>Financial Resilience in Disaster Recovery: Insurance, Sovereignty, and Community Protection</b>  <i>Larry Robinette, Tribal Liaison, WA Office of the Insurance Commissioner</i>	<b>Saving Lives on Tribal Roads: Community Driven Traffic Safety Solutions in Tribal Communities</b>  <i>Penny Rarick, Tribal Liaison, WA Traffic Safety Commission</i>
<b>Session 5</b> 3:05 <sub>PM</sub> - 3:50 <sub>PM</sub>	<b>When You Need A Little Help From Above - General Aviation to the Rescue</b>  <i>Steve Aberle, COML, Oregon Disaster Airlift Response Team</i>	<b>Long-Term Recovery Strategies: Building Tribal Resilience After Wildfire &amp; Disaster</b>  <i>Larry Robinette, Tribal Liaison, WA Office of the Insurance Commissioner</i>	<b>Enhancing Workforce Preparedness and Collaboration for Climate-Related Emergency Response in Tribal Communities</b>  <i>Audrianna Marzette, Program Manager, National Indian Health Board; Kjell Schiöberg, Climate Ready Project Lead, Marimn Health</i>
3:50 <sub>PM</sub> - 6:00 <sub>PM</sub>	Social Hour - Pre-Function Area Hors d'Oeuvres & Refreshments Available		



# 2026 Tribal Public Health Emergency Preparedness Conference



## Day 4: Thursday, May 7, 2026

8:00 <sub>AM</sub> - 9:00 <sub>AM</sub>	Buffet Breakfast - Pre-Function Area		
	General Room		
<b>Session 6</b> 9:00 <sub>AM</sub> - 10:00 <sub>AM</sub>	<b>Be Prepared for Measles: Update on Measles and How to Prevent Measles from Spreading in Your Community</b> <i>Dr. Tara Perti, Medical Epidemiologist, Portland Area IHS</i>		
<b>Session 7</b> 10:00 <sub>AM</sub> - 11:30 <sub>AM</sub>	<b>An Introduction to Legal and Administrative Preparedness for Tribal Nations</b> <i>Gregory Sunshine, Senior Analyst for Legal Preparedness, CDC</i> <i>Nicole Estes, Deputy Associate Director, Program Planning &amp; Development Unit, CDC Office of Readiness and Response, Division of State &amp; Local Readiness</i>		
	General Room	Breakout Room A	Breakout Room B
<b>Session 8</b> 11:40 <sub>AM</sub> - 12:20 <sub>PM</sub>	<b>Findings from the 2026 Novel Bird Flu Tabletop Exercise</b> <i>Jessica McKee, Tribal Public Health Programs Administrator, AIHC; Faith Turk, Environmental Public Health Coordinator, AIHC</i>	<b>Emergency Support Function 11: Agriculture and Natural Resources Tribal Brief</b> <i>Evert Sterling, EFS#11 Coordinator, USDA</i>	<b>An Interactive Discussion on Tribal Water Safety Preparedness</b> <i>Melino Gianotti, Emergency Coordinator, NPAIHB; Rebecca Washakie, Environmental Public Health Coordinator, NPAIHB</i>
12:20 <sub>PM</sub> - 1:30 <sub>PM</sub>	Buffet Lunch - Pre-Function Area		
<b>Session 9</b> 1:30 <sub>PM</sub> - 3:00 <sub>PM</sub>	<b>BARNGA</b> <i>Caroline Cruz, Health and Human Services Tribal Liaison, Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs</i>	<b>Best Practices for Building Legal and Cross-Jurisdictional Coordination Issues into Exercises</b> <b>Gregory Sunshine, Senior Analyst for Legal Preparedness, CDC;</b> <b>Nicole Estes, Deputy Associate Director, Program Planning &amp; Development Unit, CDC Office of Readiness and Response, Division of State and Local Readiness</b>	1:30 <sub>PM</sub> - 2:10 <sub>PM</sub> <b>Who Are You Going to Call and How?</b> <i>Clinton Davis, Emergency Manager, Confederated Tribes of the Chehalis Reservation</i>
			2:15 <sub>PM</sub> - 3:00 <sub>PM</sub> <b>Tribal Communications PACE Planning – from Smoke Signals to Satellites</b> <i>Steve Aberle, COML, Oregon Disaster Airlift Response Team</i>



# 2026 Tribal Public Health Emergency Preparedness Conference



## Day 4: Thursday, May 7, 2026 (continued)

3:00 <sub>PM</sub> - 3:15 <sub>PM</sub>	Break - Pre-function Area, Snacks Provided		
	Breakout Room A		Breakout Room B
Session 10 3:15 <sub>PM</sub> - 3:55 <sub>PM</sub>	<p><i>Climate Change and Its Impact on the Health of Tribal Communities</i></p> <p><i>Melino Gianotti, Emergency Coordinator, NPAIHB; Rebecca Washakie, Environmental Public Health Coordinator, NPAIHB</i></p>		<p><b>Public Health Emergency Preparedness (PHEP) 101: Partnering with Tribal Nations in Public Health Emergency Response</b></p> <p><i>Amber McPherson, Readiness Manager, WA State Department of Health</i></p>
	General Room	Breakout Room A	Breakout Room B
Session 11 3:15 <sub>PM</sub> - 5:30 <sub>PM</sub>	<p>Washington Tribes Fireside Chat</p> <p>Tribal and State Breakout</p>	<p>Oregon Tribes Fireside Chat</p> <p>Tribal and State Breakout</p>	<p>Idaho Tribes Fireside Chat</p> <p>Tribal and State Breakout</p>

## Day 5: Friday, May 9, 2026

8:00 <sub>AM</sub> -9:00 <sub>AM</sub>	Buffet Breakfast - Pre-Function Area
	General Room
Session 12 9:00 <sub>AM</sub> - 10:00 <sub>AM</sub>	<p><b>Opioids and Overdose Response</b></p> <p><i>Sean Hemmerle, Program Director, WA State Project to Prevent Prescription Drug/Opioid Overdose-Related Deaths, WA State Department of Health</i></p>
10:00 <sub>AM</sub> -10:20 <sub>AM</sub>	Break - Pre-Function Area, Snacks Provided <i>(extra time allotted for room check-out)</i>
Session 13 10:20 <sub>AM</sub> - 11:20 <sub>AM</sub>	<p><b>A Potential Treatment for Substance Use Disorders: Data on GLP-1 and GIP Combination Drugs for SUD Patients</b></p> <p><i>Dr. Frank James, Health Officer, Lummi Nation Paul James, RN, Intern, Lummi Nation</i></p>
Session 14 11:20 <sub>AM</sub> - 11:45 <sub>AM</sub>	<p><b>Wrap-Up Session</b></p> <p><i>Nicole Smith, Senior Biostatistician, Environmental Public Health, NPAIHB</i></p> <p><i>Safe travels home!</i></p>

### Attendee Meals Provided:

**Wednesday & Thursday:** Buffet Breakfast & Buffet Lunch

**Friday:** Buffet Breakfast

### Other Refreshments & Snacks Provided

**Monday through Friday:** Coffee, Tea & Water All Day

**Wednesday:** Afternoon Snack / Light Hors d'Oeuvres | **Thursday:** Afternoon Snack | **Friday:** Morning Snack



NORTHWEST PORTLAND AREA  
INDIAN HEALTH BOARD  
*Indian Leadership for Indian Health*



OREGON  
HEALTH  
AUTHORITY



Washington State Department of  
HEALTH



*Meals Provided for All Conference Attendees:*

***Monday & Tuesday***

- \* *Coffee, Tea & Water All Day*

***Wednesday & Thursday***

- \* *Coffee, Tea & Water All Day*
- \* *Buffet Breakfast & Lunch*
- \* *Afternoon Snack / Hors d'Oeuvres*

***Friday***

- \* *Coffee, Tea & Water All Day*
- \* *Buffet Breakfast*
- \* *Morning Snack*

## **Session 1.1**

### **Lessons Learned from the Unexpected: An All-Hazards Approach**

*Daniel Ravenel, Emergency Management Manager, Quinault Indian Nation*

*Elyse Kelsey, WA Sea Grant Fellowship; Quinault Indian Nation*

*Desiree Markishtum, Emergency Coordinator, Quinault Indian Nation*

Quinault Indian Nation (QIN) Emergency Management staff will present on the hazards they face as a rural coastal community and how they plan for, mitigate, respond to, and recover from these hazards, even when they're not expected. They will go over how the changing climate and sea-level rise have affected the community and how the community has responded. During the presentation, they will focus on lessons learned from responses to Search and Rescue (air, ground, and water), mass-casualty events (collapse of a water tower), and emergencies involving multiple agencies (fire + SAR). Highlights will include the importance of training and exercise, staffing plans, building relationships, and the development of a comprehensive, flexible response framework.

## **Session 1.2**

### **The Unseen Emergency: Environmental Health Threats That Become Public Health Crises**

*Brian Fullen, EHS Officer, Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation*

Public health emergencies in tribal communities often do not begin with sirens, emergency declarations, or hospital data. Many start quietly through unsafe housing, contaminated drinking water, fire-damaged structures, environmental degradation, or chemical exposure in homes, RVs, and encampments. By the time these conditions are recognized as emergencies, exposure has often already occurred.

This session reframes Tribal Environmental Health & Safety (EHS) work as a critical early warning component of public health emergency preparedness. Drawing on anonymized real-world case examples, the presenter will demonstrate how environmental health indicators often surface long before clinical impacts are detected, and how delayed recognition can increase risk to families, responders, and treaty-protected resources.

Participants will explore environmental health scenarios that are increasingly common across the Northwest, including unsafe and uninhabitable housing, drug-contaminated living environments, fire-damaged structures, debris and waste accumulation, and sites located near waterways or culturally significant areas. The session will highlight how Tribal EHS programs identify emerging

threats, intervene early, and coordinate with public health, housing, behavioral health, emergency management, and law enforcement partners to prevent escalation.

Emphasis will be placed on practical lessons learned, prioritization strategies, partnership development, responder safety, and gaps in preparedness planning. The session is intentionally discussion-forward, with significant time reserved for participant questions and shared problem-solving, recognizing that many communities are facing similar challenges with limited resources.

## **Session 2-1**

### **Part One: Preventing Foodborne Outbreaks at Temporary Events**

*Tia Skerbeck, Councilwoman, Lower Elwha Klallam Tribe*

*Ryan Sealy, Environmental Health Scientist, NPAIHB*

*Melino Gianotti, Emergency Coordinator, NPAIHB*

*Faith Turk, Environmental Public Health Coordinator, AIHC*

Large cultural gatherings and temporary events, such as Canoe Journeys, present unique food safety challenges due to temporary food vendors, limited infrastructure, and high visitor volume. To support safe food service while honoring culturally significant events, the American Indian Health Commission (AIHC) and the Lower Elwha Klallam Tribe collaborated to develop a model temporary food code designed to guide food safety practices at tribal gatherings and other temporary events. This presentation describes the process used to develop the model temporary food code and accompanying vendor resources, including adaptable guidance tailored to the needs of individual events. During the 2025 Canoe Journey hosted by the Lower Elwha Klallam Tribe, the Northwest Portland Area Indian Health Board (NPAIHB) supported implementation of the model code by providing on-site technical assistance and working directly with food vendors to reinforce food safety practices. Lessons learned from planning and implementation will be shared, including strategies for vendor preparation, communication, resource coordination, and volunteer support. Key takeaways highlight the importance of flexibility, collaboration, and maintaining core food safety practices to help prevent foodborne illness outbreaks during large cultural gatherings.

### **Part Two: Coordination and Communication During Foodborne Illness Outbreaks**

*CDR Christopher Fish, Director, Division of Environmental Health Services, Indian Health Service; TBD*

Foodborne illnesses are a persistent and preventable public health challenge in the United States. The CDC estimates that approximately 9.9 million illnesses attributable to the 7 most common foodborne pathogens occur annually, resulting in 53,300 hospitalizations and 931 deaths.

In the Pacific Northwest, public health agencies respond to approximately 60–100 or more reported foodborne outbreaks each year. These events range from localized clusters associated with retail food establishments to regional outbreaks linked to widely distributed commercial products. Rapid detection, coordinated investigation, and effective communication are essential to prevent illnesses and maintain public trust.

Tribal communities face unique considerations in foodborne illness surveillance and response, including jurisdictional complexity, geographic remoteness, limited laboratory access, and the need for culturally appropriate risk communication. Foodborne illness complaints, which can be a signal of an outbreak, are crucial in public health response. Responding effectively to foodborne illnesses relies on relationships that foster timely information sharing among reporting jurisdictions with Tribal health departments, Indian Health Service (IHS), federal partners, environmental health programs, and food regulatory authorities.

This roundtable will focus on strengthening coordination and communication processes during foodborne illness outbreak investigations and complaint response. Participants will explore:

- Best practices for intake and evaluation of foodborne illness complaints
- Interjurisdictional coordination between Tribal, state, local, and federal partners
- Laboratory coordination and data sharing
- Environmental health and epidemiology collaboration during investigations
- Risk communication strategies tailored to Tribal communities
- After-action review processes to improve future response

Through facilitated discussion and shared experiences, the session will highlight practical strategies to enhance outbreak response capacity, clarify communication pathways, and support Tribal sovereignty while ensuring effective public health action. The goal is to promote resilient, collaborative systems that reduce illness burden and protect community health during foodborne disease events.

## Session 2-2

### **Applying High-Resolution LiDAR in Emergency Management for the Nez Perce Tribe**

*Brent Lloyd, GIS Analyst, Nez Perce Tribe*

In disaster management, LiDAR has helped with precise mapping and monitoring. The Nez Perce Tribe, along with other government agencies monitoring tribal land, has used LiDAR data to map flood areas and identify potential flood zones that affect the natural terrain, agricultural land, civil infrastructure, and people's livelihoods. A few of the outputs from the LiDAR data are 3D terrain models, tree heights and counts, and infrastructure identification. LiDAR in fire management with

the Nez Perce Tribe has enabled understanding of fuel loads, risk mitigation, and post-fire assessments.

### **Session 2-3**

#### **Strengthening Tribal Emergency Response: AMBER Alert Implementation in Indian Country**

*Amy Hood-Schwindt, Associate, NCJTC at Fox Valley Technical College*

The implementation of effective emergency response systems is critical to protecting children and strengthening community safety in Tribal Nations. The Ashlynnne Mike AMBER Alert in Indian Country Act of 2018 was enacted to address gaps in emergency alerting systems that previously limited Tribal participation in AMBER Alert activations. The Act amended the PROTECT Act, allowing federally recognized Tribes and states to receive support for developing and integrating AMBER Alert communication plans.

This presentation will explore how the AMBER Alert Training and Technical Assistance Program, through the AMBER Alert in Indian Country (AIIIC) initiative, assists Tribal communities in strengthening their emergency response capabilities for cases involving missing or abducted children. AIIIC works directly with Tribal Nations to provide training, technical assistance, and guidance on integrating Tribal alerting procedures with state and regional AMBER Alert systems.

Participants will gain insight into how coordinated planning between Tribal governments, law enforcement agencies, and State AMBER Alert Coordinators enhances cross-jurisdictional response and improves the likelihood of safely recovering missing children. The session will also highlight ongoing outreach efforts to ensure that all federally recognized Tribes have access to these resources and to collaborative partnerships.

By strengthening communication systems, improving coordination, and increasing public awareness, AMBER Alert in Indian Country supports Tribal communities in building stronger emergency preparedness and response frameworks to protect vulnerable children.

### **Session 3-2**

#### **Bridging the Gap: Connecting Communities to Critical Resources During Emergencies**

*Jessica Wilkinson, Medical Logistics Supervisor, Washington State Department of Health*

During emergencies, timely access to medical supplies and equipment can significantly improve community response and health outcomes. The Washington State Department of Health's Medical Logistics Center (MLC) serves as a statewide resource hub that maintains and deploys critical

medical supplies, durable medical equipment, and personal protective equipment to support partners during public health incidents and disasters. Tribal communities play a vital role in Washington's emergency preparedness landscape and understanding how to access these resources can strengthen community resilience and response capability.

This session will provide an overview of the MLC and the types of resources available to support tribal public health and emergency preparedness efforts. Participants will learn about key categories of support, including durable medical equipment, personal protective equipment, medical countermeasure distribution, and other response resources that may be available during incidents such as wildfires, smoke events, infectious disease outbreaks, or other public health emergencies.

The presentation will also walk through the process for requesting resources, including coordination pathways, situational considerations, and how tribal partners can integrate resource requests into existing emergency management and public health response structures. Real-world examples will highlight how these resources have been used to support community response and continuity of care.

By the end of the session, participants will have a clearer understanding of what support may be available through the MLC, how to request resources during an incident, and how to strengthen coordination with state partners to ensure timely access to critical medical supplies when communities need them most.

### Session 3-3

#### **The Missing and Endangered Persons (MEP) Alert: A National Indigenous-Led Solution to Protect Our People**

*Brian Wadsworth, Chief Operating Officer, Native Public Media*

The Missing and Endangered Persons (MEP) Alert is a groundbreaking, Indigenous-led initiative designed to close critical gaps in how our nation responds to missing persons cases, particularly those involving Indigenous people, youth labeled as “runaways,” and vulnerable adults. The MEP Alert is part of the federal emergency alert system, the Integrated Public Alert Warning System (IPAWS). Also housed within IPAWS are the AMBER Alert and other life-saving emergency alerts. The MEP Alert is a new tool that could be used to recover missing persons who do not fit the criteria of the AMBER Alert. However, only FEMA-authorized Alerting Authorities can issue emergency alerts through IPAWS. Any federal, state, or local government, or federally recognized Tribe or territory, can become an Alerting Authority.

Rooted in the values of community responsibility, collective safety, and kinship, the MEP Alert exemplifies Native innovation that shapes national policy and strengthens public safety across Tribal, state, and federal systems. Developed through years of Tribal advocacy and collaboration, the MEP Alert empowers Tribal Nations to become Alerting Authorities, placing decision-making and rapid response in the hands of local communities. The MEP Alert honors the principle that every life is sacred. Native Public Media (NPM) will share lessons from the development and implementation of the MEP Alert, and information on how federally recognized Tribes can become Alerting Authorities. NPM will also share its recommended criteria, developed by a working group of law enforcement, MMIP advocates, and AMBER Alert experts, for Alerting Authorities to implement MEP Alert.

### Session 4-1

#### **Active Shooters Training: How to Barricade and Secure Your Doors & Windows & Plan Your Escape Route**

*Dan Martinez, Emergency Manager, Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs*  
*Wymon Harry, Asst Emergency Manager, Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs*

As a Train-the-Trainer Instructor through the ALICE training courses, I now teach Active Shooter classes. I have taught well over 10 courses in Indian Country and with non-profit organizations. My experience protecting International Embassies during the Vietnam War was to secure, barricade, and protect our Ambassador and American citizens, and follow Military personnel. Our objective is to teach hand-over-hand how to secure doors and windows, and what to do in the event of an active shooter. These skills can save your life and protect others, as we learn what to do during an active shooter event.

### Session 4-2

#### **Financial Resilience in Disaster Recovery: Insurance, Sovereignty, and Community Protection**

*Larry Robinette, Tribal Liaison, Office of the Insurance Commissioner*

Disaster recovery is not only physical—it is financial. Drawing from wildfire recovery experience with the Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation following the Okanogan Complex and North Star Fires, this session explores the critical role financial systems play in long-term recovery. Wildfire recovery revealed how insurance navigation, claims processing, mitigation planning, and consumer protections significantly impact how quickly households and communities stabilize.

Participants will examine how financial preparedness intersects with public health and emergency management, including:

- Insurance coverage gaps revealed during wildfire recovery
- Coordination between Tribal governments and state agencies
- Fraud prevention and consumer protection; and
- Long-term financial recovery planning.

The session will also reference recent deployments supporting flood and wildfire recovery efforts across Washington State to illustrate how insurance systems function during active disaster response and extended recovery phases. This presentation is designed to increase understanding of financial resilience as a core component of Tribal emergency preparedness and recovery planning.

Key Takeaway:

Financial resilience is foundational to recovery. When Tribal communities understand and engage in insurance and risk systems proactively, recovery is faster, more equitable, and more sustainable.

### **Session 4-3**

#### **Saving Lives on Tribal Roads: Community-Driven Traffic Safety Solutions in Tribal Communities**

*Penny Rarick, Tribal Liaison, Washington Traffic Safety Commission*

Traffic crashes are a leading and preventable cause of death in many Tribal communities, making roadway safety an urgent public health and community wellbeing issue. This session explores factors contributing to traffic fatalities among Native people while highlighting Tribal led approaches that strengthen prevention, safety, and community resilience.

In Washington, although Native people represent about two percent of the population, they account for roughly one in twenty traffic fatalities. Fatality rates among Native people are consistently three to five times higher than the statewide average, with crashes occurring both on and off Tribal lands. Since 2014, more than 300 Native people have lost their lives in traffic crashes in Washington, and more than one-quarter were under the age of 25.

Young driver safety represents a critical opportunity for prevention. Washington research shows young drivers without driver education experience significantly higher crash involvement, including 67 percent more crashes among drivers ages 18 to 20, and 60 percent more crashes among drivers ages 21 to 24. Limited access to driver education in rural and Tribal communities can create barriers that disproportionately affect Tribal youth.

Native women are also increasingly impacted. While women account for about 30 percent of traffic fatalities statewide, Native women represent nearly half of Native traffic fatalities and nearly half of Native driver fatalities in Washington. Many of these crashes involve multiple high-risk driving behaviors, including low seat belt use and roadway departure crashes on rural roads. These patterns highlight emerging safety concerns and the need for prevention strategies that better support safer travel for women across communities.

This presentation will highlight Tribal partnerships with the Washington Traffic Safety Commission, including Tribal Traffic Safety Coordinators and community-driven strategies rooted in Indigenous knowledge and Tribal priorities. Participants will gain insight into emerging approaches and how Tribal leadership is helping shift traffic safety from a reactive system to a proactive public health approach that supports safer roads and healthier Tribal communities.

## **Session 5-1**

### **When You Need a Little Help from Above - General Aviation to the Rescue**

*Steve Aberle, COML, Oregon Disaster Airlift Response Team*

Suddenly, a disaster or large emergency strikes your Tribe! Normal travel and supply routes are impassable. In emergency management parlance, your Tribe is now living on an island, or perhaps on multiple separated islands.

However:

- Some Tribal members need shelter.
- Medical supplies need replenishment.
- Everyone is short of food after the shelves in stores, and food banks are quickly emptied.

Yes, federal help may eventually arrive, but how can local disaster needs be met until those supplies become available? In the interim, what if the needed food, temporary shelters, and urgent medical supplies could be flown to you by a fleet of general aviation volunteers?

This presentation introduces the Oregon Disaster Airlift Response Team (ODART, [www.odart.org](http://www.odart.org)), a 501(c)(3) with capabilities to operate small aircraft, float planes, helicopters, and drones to provide tribal communities with emergency and disaster assistance. Also included is information on how to request assistance from ODART, especially in times when commercial communications have failed or are overloaded.

Founded in 2022, ODART holds annual full-scale exercises to practice for the inevitable. To date, during its exercises, ODART has flown fresh, non-perishable, dehydrated, and freeze-dried food and

bottled water to four tribes on the Oregon coast, one tribe on the Washington coast, two tribes on the California coast, four tribes in the I-5 corridor, and two tribes in the US-97 corridor.

## **Session 5-2**

### **Long-Term Recovery Strategies: Building Tribal Resilience After Wildfire & Disaster**

*Larry Robinette, Tribal Liaison, Office of the Insurance Commissioner*

Disaster response is immediate. Recovery is long-term.

This session explores the structure and purpose of Long-Term Recovery Groups (LTRGs) through firsthand accounts of wildfire recovery with the Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation following the Okanogan Complex and North Star Fires. These fires illustrate how recovery extends far beyond containment, requiring sustained coordination, housing solutions, infrastructure repair, financial navigation, and community stabilization over multiple years.

Participants will examine how recovery efforts evolved after large-scale wildfire events, including the challenges of coordinating Tribal programs, state agencies, nonprofit partners, and community resources. The session will also connect lessons from more recent disasters, including flooding and wildfire events across Washington, to demonstrate how recovery systems can be strengthened before the next emergency occurs.

Through case discussion and practical examples, attendees will gain tools to help structure long-term recovery planning within their own Tribal communities.

Key Takeaway: Long-term recovery is not a phase—it is a system. Tribal communities benefit from structured, sustained coordination that carries recovery beyond the initial disaster response.

## **Session 5-3**

### **Enhancing Workforce Preparedness and Collaboration for Climate-Related Emergency Response in Tribal Communities**

*Audrianna Marzette, Program Manager, National Indian Health Board*

*Kjell Schioberg, Climate Ready Tribe Project Lead, Marimn Health*

Climate change is creating new public health emergencies for Tribal communities, from wildfire smoke to harmful algae blooms. At the same time, Tribal health programs must coordinate with Tribal, state, and federal emergency response systems. Strengthening workforce readiness and

communication systems is essential for responding effectively while respecting Native traditions and Tribal sovereignty.

In this session, we will share practical approaches that Tribal health programs are using to strengthen emergency preparedness. Presenters will highlight examples from Tribal health projects, including climate vulnerability assessments, updates to Emergency Operations Plans, improved emergency communication systems, and tabletop preparedness exercises focused on climate-related health risks.

The session will also discuss emerging environmental health concerns linked to climate change. For example, Tribal environmental monitoring of Coeur d'Alene Lake has shown that rising water temperatures increase the risk of harmful blue-green algae blooms and threaten native fish species. These changes can affect Tribal health, food systems, and environmental protection.

Participants will take part in a guided scenario that explores how a harmful algae bloom could impact a Tribal community. During this discussion, attendees will discuss the challenges of working together and ways to improve communication among Tribal health programs, emergency management partners, and community organizations.

By the end of the session, participants will discover useful strategies for Tribal health systems to improve workforce readiness, incorporate climate factors into preparedness planning, and build response systems that align with Tribal priorities and governance.

## Social Hour

Join us for a relaxed and engaging Social Hour, designed to give attendees an opportunity to unwind and connect beyond the day's sessions. This informal gathering provides a welcoming space to network with fellow participants, speakers, and industry professionals, exchange ideas, and build meaningful connections.

Enjoy light refreshments while continuing conversations sparked during the conference or simply take a moment to relax and recharge. Whether you're looking to expand your professional network or engage in casual discussion, the Social Hour offers a comfortable and friendly environment for all.

## Session 6

### **Be Prepared for Measles: Update on Measles and How to Prevent Measles from Spreading in Your Community**

*Dr. Tara Perti, Medical Epidemiologist, Portland Area IHS*

The resurgence of measles in the United States, which began in January of 2025 and resulted in more cases than any year since 1991, has continued. We have continued to see outbreaks affecting most states in the country, occurring when cases of measles are introduced into under-vaccinated

communities. At the beginning of 2026, there were more cases per week than during most of the preceding year, driven by a very large outbreak in South Carolina. In the Portland Area, there have been measles outbreaks in all three states, with more cases in the first two months of 2026 than all of 2025. To protect communities, ensuring high measles vaccination coverage ( $\geq 95\%$ ), implementing infection prevention recommendations, and responding promptly to suspected measles cases can prevent sustained transmission. We will review infection prevention recommendations, public health interventions, and resources available to help Tribes respond if a case of measles is identified in the community.

## **Session 7**

### **An Introduction to Legal and Administrative Preparedness for Tribal Nations**

*Gregory Sunshine, Senior Analyst for Legal Preparedness, Centers for Disease Control & Prevention; Nicole Estes, Deputy Associate Director, Program Planning & Development Unit, CDC/Office of Readiness and Response/Division of State & Local Readiness*

Navigating legal and administrative systems is a core element of response readiness, and yet health departments' training on laws and policies is among the greatest workforce development needs. This session will provide an overview of public health laws and legal authorities for response, and an overview of the ways in which tribal nations can utilize jurisdiction-specific strategies to recognize and address legal and administrative issues when emergencies threaten their communities and critical infrastructure.

## **Session 8-1**

### **Findings from the 2026 Novel Bird Flu Tabletop Exercise**

*Jessica McKee, Tribal Public Health Programs Administrator, AIHC; Faith Turk, Environmental Public Health Coordinator, AIHC*

This presentation will provide an overview of the 2026 Novel Bird Flu Tabletop Exercise series, including the strengths and gaps identified and next steps to ensure our state is prepared for a novel bird flu outbreak.

## **Session 8-2**

### **Emergency Support Function 11: Agriculture and Natural Resources Tribal Brief**

*Evert Sterling, EFS#11 Coordinator, USDA*

This session will provide an overview of Emergency Support Function (ESF) #11 – Agriculture and Natural Resources, including its mission, role, and coordinator responsibilities during preparedness and response. The discussion will include how and why ESF #11 works directly with Tribes to support their emergency management efforts.

We will review how ESF #11 is structured and outline the agencies that support ESF #11 and their capabilities. The session will explain how these resources can help participants achieve their mission objectives during emergencies. Whether it's integrating agriculture and natural resources into planning or coordinating support during disaster operations, attendees will gain insight into how ESF #11 collaborates with federal, state, tribal, and local partners to strengthen overall preparedness and recovery efforts.

By the end of the session, participants will have an overview of ESF #11's responsibilities and understand how its coordination and resources can directly support their mission before, during, and after disasters. Note: This topic is relevant to the conference due to the One-Health consideration

### **Session 8-3**

#### **An Interactive Discussion on Tribal Water Safety Preparedness**

*Melino Gianotti, Emergency Coordinator, NPAIHB; Rebecca Washakie, Environmental Public Health Coordinator, NPAIHB*

Canoe Journey, tribal fishing, and water-based activities in the Northwest occur amid changing environmental conditions, including cold-water exposure, weather variability, and poor air quality. These conditions pose real but preventable risks that require prevention strategies informed by both environmental data and lived experience. American Indian and Alaska Native people experience disproportionately high rates of water-related injury and fatality, highlighting the importance of access to resources and relevant training. Prioritizing approaches developed with and tribal communities that are relevant to specific environmental contexts is essential.

Participants will learn about the tribal water safety resources that the NPAIHB Environmental Public Health Program is providing and what we hope to build in the future. We will then do an interactive activity to share and learn from each other. When are you most likely to be on the water? What safety precautions do you take? What resources would you like to see in your community? Let's talk about it.

### **Session 9-1**

## **BARNGA**

*Caroline Cruz, Health & Human Services Tribal Liaison, Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs*

Participants will participate in an experiential activity called BARNGA. This is a simulation game on cultural clashes. It induces the shock of realizing that in spite of many similarities people from other cultures have differences in the way we do things. They must understand and reconcile these differences to function effectively in a cross-cultural group.

## **Session 9-2**

### **Best Practices for Building Legal and Cross-Jurisdictional Coordination Issues into Exercises**

*Gregory Sunshine, Senior Analyst for Legal Preparedness, Centers for Disease Control & Prevention; Nicole Estes, Deputy Associate Director, Program Planning & Development Unit, CDC/Office of Readiness and Response/Division of State & Local Readiness*

Effective navigation of legal and administrative systems requires practice. This session will introduce attendees to common legal and cross-jurisdictional coordination issues and provide hands-on training on creating exercise scenarios that allow them to explore these challenges and develop systems and policies for efficient response.

### **Session 9-3a (1:30 – 2:10)**

#### **Who are you going to call and how?**

*Clinton Davis, Emergency Manager, Confederated Tribes of the Chehalis Reservation*

Established a PACE plan (Primary, Alternate, Contingency, Emergency) for communication and focus on having the "E" component, such as Sat phones and preferably a SHARES HF Ham Radio set up as outlined by the WA State Mil Department and State EMD. We will walk you through how to plan for, buy, and set up a SHARES system, and use it to communicate with local EOCs, state and federal agencies, and Tribes that have the ability. It costs less than you think and does not require specialized certification and training. A must-have to keep you communicating in an emergency.

### **Session 9-3b (2:15 - 2:55)**

## **Tribal Communications PACE Planning – from Smoke Signals to Satellites**

*Steve Aberle, COML, Oregon Disaster Airlift Response Team*

“PACE” is an acronym for Primary, Alternate, Contingency, and Emergency, and this methodology can be applied to response planning under all Emergency Support Functions, not just communications. It is essentially a triple-redundant plan for handling system degradation. Is triple redundancy enough? What options are available that can be plugged into the PACE plan for your tribe?

During emergency/disaster incidents, some things will work and others will not, but survival may depend on how well you’ve planned for working around potential infrastructure systemic failures.

This presentation examines communications options both historically and today, and it will enumerate the pros and cons of many options you might want to review the Communications PACE Plan developed by the Oregon Disaster Airlift Response Team (ODART, <https://www.odart.org>), which includes many options at each PACE level, including considering the Communications PACE Plan developed by the Oregon Disaster Airlift Response Team (ODART, <https://www.odart.org>), which includes many options at each PACE level, including considerations for your plan. We will also look at the Communications PACE Plan developed by the Oregon Disaster Airlift Response Team (ODART, <https://www.odart.org>), which includes many different options at each PACE level, and, as one might expect, aviation communications options.

## **Session 10-1**

### **Climate Change and Its Impact on the Health of Tribal Communities**

*Melino Gianotti, Emergency Coordinator, NPAIHB; Rebecca Washakie, Environmental Public Health Coordinator, NPAIHB*

Climate change is no longer a distant threat—it is something communities are experiencing right now. Rising temperatures, wildfires, drought, flooding, and severe storms pose real risks to human health and safety. These events can affect air and water quality, increase injuries and illness, and place greater pressure on medical services, public health systems, and emergency response. Tribal communities can face additional challenges due to geographic isolation, limited resources, and the need to protect cultural resources, traditional foods, and their way of life.

This session will explore the connections among climate change, severe weather, and public health in simple, practical terms. Presenters will provide a short overview of how

climate-related events, such as heat waves, poor air quality, flooding, and infrastructure disruptions, can impact community health and emergency response systems. The session will also highlight the NPAIHB Environmental Public Health Division services and goals, and how the division can assist the concerns and needs of the Northwest Tribes and communities.

Participants will learn how environmental health professionals can help connect emergency management, public health programs, and community leadership to strengthen disaster preparedness. Examples of practical strategies, planning tools, and partnerships that support tribal and local preparedness will be shared.

The presentation will be followed by a facilitated discussion where participants are invited to share their experiences, community concerns, and priorities related to climate change, disaster planning, and public health. Through conversation and networking, participants can learn from one another and identify shared challenges and solutions. The goal of this session is to strengthen collaboration and better understand how the NPAIHB Environmental Public Health Division can support tribal communities now and into the future.

## Session 10-2

### **Public Health Emergency Preparedness (PHEP) 101: Partnering with Tribal Nations in Public Health Emergency Response**

*Amber McPherson, Readiness Manager, Washington Department of Health*

Public health emergencies, including infectious disease outbreaks, environmental health incidents, and natural disasters, require strong coordination across Tribal, state, and federal partners. Tribal Nations play a critical role in protecting the health and safety of their communities and bring unique expertise, leadership, and cultural perspectives to emergency preparedness and response efforts.

This session provides a foundational overview of the Public Health Emergency Preparedness (PHEP) program funded by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and explores how Tribal Nations can engage with state public health partners in preparedness planning, response coordination, and information sharing. Participants will gain an understanding of how public health emergency systems operate, how preparedness funding supports statewide capabilities, and where opportunities exist for collaboration while respecting Tribal sovereignty and decision-making authority.

The session will highlight practical examples of coordination between Tribal and state public health partners, including preparedness planning, surveillance coordination, and emergency response

structures. Participants will explore approaches to strengthen partnerships, improve situational awareness, and support Tribal-led response efforts.

Participants will leave with a clearer understanding of the preparedness landscape and strategies to enhance collaboration between Tribal communities and public health partners before, during, and after emergencies.

## Session 11

### Tribal State Breakout sessions & Fireside Chat

This fireside chat brings together tribal and state leaders for an informal, leader-to-leader discussion on public health emergency preparedness and response. Hosted as a Tribal/State breakout session during the 2026 Tribal Public Health Emergency Preparedness Conference, the session will provide a dedicated space to explore shared challenges, priorities, and opportunities for collaboration across jurisdictions.

The session will begin as a tribal-led conversation, giving tribal representatives the opportunity to discuss among themselves and identify key priorities. State partners will be invited to join at a time determined by tribal participants, either at the outset or later in the session, ensuring that the dialogue remains grounded in tribal leadership and perspectives.

Participants will engage in meaningful dialogue to strengthen coordination, enhance communication, and sustain effective response planning between tribal nations and state public health agencies. Emphasizing the importance of partnership, this session highlights the critical role of state leadership in supporting preparedness efforts that are responsive to the needs and priorities of tribal communities.

This interactive listening session is designed to foster mutual understanding, elevate key issues, and support continued progress toward coordinated and resilient public health emergency response systems.

Participants from the States:

- Washington
  - Dennis Worsham, Secretary of Health, Washington State & Tribal liaisons
- Oregon
  - Naomi Adeline-Biggs, Public Health Director
  - Sejal Hathi, Director of OHA
  - Julie Johnson, Tribal Affairs Director
  - Carey Palm, Preparedness Tribal Liaison
- Idaho
  - Valerie Wade, Coeur d'Alene Tribe Environmental Programs Officer (running for state office)
  - **Trish Carter-Goodheart, Nez Perce, Director of Community Resilience for Thrive Safety Solutions**

- The Idaho discussion will focus on identifying connections with the appropriate people in the Idaho State government.

Attendees will leave with a clearer understanding of how environmental health functions as prevention-based emergency preparedness, and how earlier, coordinated engagement can reduce harm and strengthen public health response across jurisdictions.

## Session 12

### Opioids and overdose response

*Sean Hemmerle, Program Director, Washington State Project to Prevent Prescription Drug/Opioid Overdose-Related Deaths, Washington Department of Health*

Attendees of this session will be provided with information on how to recognize and respond to opioid- and stimulant-related overdoses, as well as how to administer both injectable and nasal naloxone, including hands-on demonstrations. The session will also cover how to obtain naloxone kits for personal use and in the workplace, and how Tribes, Tribal Health Organizations, and Urban Indian Health Organizations in Washington can access free naloxone. In addition, participants will learn how opioids interact with the body and brain and how to address common misconceptions regarding illicit fentanyl.

## Session 13

### A Potential Treatment for Substance Use Disorders: Data on GLP-1 and GIP Combination Drugs for SUD Patients

*Dr. Frank James, Health Officer, Lummi Nation*  
*Paul James, RN, Intern at Lummi Nation*

The long-term prospective studies needed to bring this into the mainstream have already started, and final data will be available within two years. But for now, why is this an exciting new opportunity? There are very few treatments for most SUDs, so the possibility of effective medical treatments is very exciting. We will review the data and the challenges that make this approach still challenging.