

Exchange Network Forum

Thursday, July 11, 2024

1:00 – 2:00 PM ET

Welcome

Alex O’Neill, EPA Office of Information Management (OIM), Office of Mission Support (OMS)

- Alex O’Neill welcomed participants to the meeting and noted that the format is designed to be an open meeting to encourage interaction between participants.
- The meeting materials, including the summaries from the Forum meetings are available on the [Exchange Network website](#).
- Alex reviewed the agenda:
 - Meet Your EN Coordinator: Region 2
 - Environmental Information & Innovation (E2i) National Meeting
 - CDX Login.gov Integration
 - EN Reinvigoration Update: Data Flows
 - Open Forum

Meet Your EN Coordinator: Region 2

Alex O’Neill, EPA Office of Information Management (OIM), Office of Mission Support (OMS)

- Alex O’Neill introduced Barry Kaye who was unable to attend the EN Forum.
 - Barry is an IT Specialist and has been with EPA for over 31 years and the Region 2 Regional Exchange Network Coordinator for 8 years.
- Region 2 currently has three open grants and 43 total grants since 2002.
- States are the primary recipients of grants, followed by Tribes and territories.
- Region 2 has received three EN grants since 2021, which funded an ATTAINS project, a project that included individual capacity building and two open data projects which include GIS.
- Les Benedict presented on the Saint Regis Mohawk Tribe’s GIS project: Tribal Community Geographic Information System (GIS) Portal.
- The Saint Regis Mohawk Tribe’s GIS Tribal Portal:
 - Provides the public Environmental data access, on-demand
 - Responds to community needs
 - Enhances data collecting for Tribal employees

- Supports Tribal environmental management and policy decisions
- Lowers administrative process costs in the delivery of map data to the community
- The Tribe uses ESRI ArcGIS Hub to organize Tribal data, share open data, improve Tribal service delivery for mapping for decision-making, and to leverage existing data and technology.
- ArcGIS Hub for the Tribe is funded and supported by the US Department of Interior, Bureau of Indian Affairs licensing.
- The type of features provided include forest cover types, non-forest cover types, rivers, streams and water bodies, roads, wetlands, urban interface areas and boundaries, as well as links to external GIS data.
- The Tribe created a content map to present information in a culturally relevant format. The map depicts Mohawk language for name places.
- Les Benedict will share a link to the Tribal Community GIS Portal

Environmental Information & Innovation (E2i) National Meeting

- The E2i National meeting will be in Kansas City, MO, September 17-19, 2024.
- Registration for the meeting is open.
- The E2i meeting website is www.e2imeeting.net. The site includes meeting details such as:
 - A working draft agenda.
 - Registration and hotel information.
 - For state employees, information about travel expense reimbursement opportunities available through ECOS.
 - The Institute for Tribal Environmental Professionals (ITEP) and the Tribal Exchange Network Group (TXG) are awarding a limited number of travel scholarships to Tribal recipients.
- More information on the conference code and a group SF182 training request will be shared with EPA employees.
- Sign up for Exchange Network email alerts for updates about the conference.

CDX Login.gov Integration

Joe Carioti, EPA Office of Information Management (OIM), Office of Mission Support (OMS)

- The Central Data Exchange (CDX) is integrating with Login.gov.
- The Exchange Network credentials will still be based on the Network Authentication Authorization Service (NAAS) and therefore will not be impacted.
- The CDX testing environment is currently integrated with Login.gov
- The CDX production environment is scheduled to integrate with Login.gov the night of Friday August 2nd.

- Joe Carioti will follow up with Joshua Kalfas to discuss questions offline.

EN Reinvigoration Update: Data Flows

Alex O'Neill, EPA Office of Information Management (OIM), Office of Mission Support (OMS)

- The EN reinvigoration is an effort between leaders at EPA, states and Tribes to strengthen lines of communication and better enable the sharing of environmental information.
- Beginning in 2017 and continuing through the pandemic years, the EN began experiencing fewer interactions. Partnerships weakened and the network became somewhat derailed from its core mission of providing a common operating framework for sharing environmental information.
- Technology has changed significantly since the EN started, but EN systems have been slow to adapt to these changes, creating a need for the EN to modernize.
- New Executive Orders and federal legislation around open data, security and data management also require the EN to revisit how EN systems work (e.g. the Evidence Act, 21st Century Act).
- EPA recognizes that they must meet EN partners where they are and move forward together at a steady pace.
- The EN is a partnership that requires direct interaction to be successful. It is important to engage with all partners in early stages.
- EPA's vision is to increase its direct interactions with Tribal, state and territorial partners to ensure the EN adapts to changing needs and technologies.
- Some of the feedback and questions the EN has received require additional work to guide the EN's direction moving forward. For these situations, which are largely information gathering efforts, the EN creates sprint teams.
- If you are interested in participating in EN sprint teams, contact Alex O'Neill (oneill.alexander@epa.gov), Kurt Rakouskas (krakouskas@ecos.org) or Lydia Sheer (lydia.scheer@nau.edu).
- One of the EN's initial sprints focused on evaluating the scope and use patterns for core EN data exchanges.
- The goal of this sprint was to understand the current state of the EN data exchanges so EPA knows where to go in the future. Key questions the team investigated include:
 - How do partner agencies and programs use existing EN data flows?
 - How and why have those usage patterns changed over time?
 - How do current flows meet or not meet user needs?
- The analysis focused on 21 data exchanges used over the past 10 years. These data exchanges are managed by five EPA program offices and one EPA region.
- Data exchanges are in various states of activity. Some systems have been decommissioned (e.g. Underground Injection (UIC)) and others require additional context in how they are used today.

- Over the past 10 years, the EN has included over 300 unique partner organizations. For the analysis, the team categorized these into states, Tribes, territories, local organizations, federal organizations and ‘other’ (e.g. universities, NGOs, companies).
- State participation has been steady across data exchanges while Tribal participation has increased over the past ten years, primarily attributed to submissions to WQX and AQS.
- Metrics for each data exchange are available in an Excel format and will be used to guide future conversations.
- The analysis resulted in a list of environmental organizations who participate in the EN and who EPA can potentially work with and interview about their experiences.
- The team also has a list of ORG_IDs for Tribal entities submitting to WQX. They will match these against Tribal 106 grant recipients to ensure they are submitting to WQX.
- The next step is to look at how the current flows are or are not meeting user needs. The team will reach out to environmental organizations through unstructured interviews to better understand why usage patterns have changed.

Open Forum

- Q: What do you think about ArcGIS Hub sites, newer tools available in ArcGIS online?
 - A: There is a learning curve, and a good foundational understanding of ArcGIS is needed to use Hub sites. You can also add features in ArcGIS Hub to engage with the community.
- Q: Does the Department of Interior (DOI) Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) offer a stack of data to the Saint Regis Mohawk Tribe or just software licenses?
 - A: DOI BIA provides software licenses, training and support. They do not provide content. The Tribe uses publicly available datasets.
- Q: Is the Saint Regis Mohawk Tribe using ArcGIS Enterprise licenses?
 - A: The licenses are for ArcGIS Pro.
- Q: Regarding the CDX and Login.gov integration, will anything we submit through an Electronic Data Transfer (EDT), such as a data submission to Integrated Compliance Information System (ICIS) Air, be affected?
 - A: This will not be impacted. Everything on the NAAS side is using the EN spec. For an EDT data submission, you are authenticated through NAAS and then doing a submission through a node. The authentication results in a NAAS token and the submission will use that token.
- Q: Are shared Cross-Media Electronic Reporting Regulation (CROMERR) services impacted by the CDX and Login.gov integration?
 - A: No, those are not impacted as they are machine-to-machine based exchanges. Only if you go to cdx.epa.gov will you be impacted by the integration with Login.gov.
- Q: How does the EN data flow analysis timetable overlap with the removal of local keys that states used to login to get RCRA data? We had someone with a token that would login to get Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) data, but for security reasons they removed the tokens. It is possible this is aligned with diminished querying of RCRA data?

- A: The RCRA token removal is an example of the extra context we want to identify to understand why usage patterns have changed.
- Q: Does the EN data flow analysis show that we built a flow to pull down differences each day and query our RCRA data?
 - A: The metrics considered unique entities, so it didn't consider how many times a day you are querying data.
- Q: Is the EN data analysis excel spreadsheet posted somewhere?
 - A: Alex O'Neill will share the excel spreadsheet for anyone interested in reviewing the detailed data.
- Q: How are non-CDX flows going to be represented in the data flow analysis?
 - A: Consolidating data from across over 40 data flows is challenging. The non-CDX flows could be analyzed by a future sprint team.
- Q: Will the EN reinvigoration include the creation of REST APIs to query data from ICIS etc., or other machine-to-machine exchanges?
 - A: This falls into greater EN modernization. Creating API first solutions is part of the E-Enterprise Digital Strategy, so this is a priority for these system managers.