



COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE & LIFE SCIENCES
COOPERATIVE EXTENSION

WATER RESOURCES RESEARCH CENTER

WRRC Seminar Series: Universal Access to Clean Water for Tribal Communities

Date: Wednesday, February 22, 2023

Time: 12:00 pm – 1:15 pm Arizona Time

Speakers:

Anne Castle, *Senior Fellow, Getches-Wilkinson Center, University of Colorado Law School*

Heather Tanana, *Assistant Research Professor, S.J. Quinney College of Law, University of Utah*

Access to clean drinking water is a fundamental human right. As highlighted by the COVID-19 pandemic, basic water and sanitation services are critical to public health and economic development. The federal government has treaty and trust responsibilities to promote the general welfare of Tribes. Although federal programs exist to support water-related projects in Indian country, these programs historically have been underfunded. As a result, many Native American households remain without access to clean drinking water or adequate sanitation. Recent actions by the Biden Administration and Congress are bringing the necessary attention and financial resources to make real, tangible progress toward providing universal access to clean water for all Americans. The Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act included substantial funding for the Indian Health Service and Tribal funding within the Environmental Protection Agency, which can be used for drinking water projects for Tribal communities. More recently, Congress passed the Inflation Reduction Act which provided Reclamation with new funding for drinking water supply projects serving disadvantaged communities. For the first time in history, this funding will enable the federal government to more fully deliver on its responsibilities to provide basic drinking water service to Tribes. This WRRC webinar will provide an overview of federal-tribal relations and the basis for realizing the human right to water in the United States. Panelists will identify existing federal programs that can facilitate clean water access and highlight opportunities for NGOs to amplify these efforts. Recognizing the importance of Tribal sovereignty and self-determination, panelists will also discuss how to build up Tribal capacity and the necessary resources for long-term success.



Anne Castle is a senior fellow at the Getches-Wilkinson Center for Natural Resources, Energy, and the Environment at the University of Colorado Law School, focusing on western water issues, including Colorado River policy and management and the integration of Tribal water interests.

From 2009 to 2014, she was Assistant

Secretary for Water and Science at the US Department of the Interior. Castle was appointed by President Biden as the US Commissioner for the Upper Colorado River Commission and co-founded an initiative on universal access to clean and safe water on Indian reservations.



Heather Tanana is a citizen of the Navajo Nation and Assistant Professor & Wallace Stegner Center Fellow at the S.J. Quinney College of Law. She holds a Juris Doctorate from the University of Utah and a master's in Public Health from Johns Hopkins

University. Heather is experienced in state, federal, and tribal courts and clerked for Judge Nuffer at the US District Court for the District of Utah. Tanana's research interests include exploring the overlay between environmental and health policy in Indian Country. Over the past year, much of her work has focused on the Water & Tribe Initiative's Universal Access to Clean Water project.

Register Here: <https://tinyurl.com/universal-clean-water>

The WRRC uses Zoom to host its webinars and attendees can ask questions via the Zoom chat function. To request an alternate format of this webinar for disability-related access, please contact us at wrrc@arizona.edu.

Upcoming Events: <https://www.wrrc.arizona.edu/events>