



# Down to Earth



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Top left to right: Jason Thomas (Environmental Office Liaison), Chance Bentley, David Hebert, Lester Randall (Kickapoo Tribe Chairman), Dusty Brown  
Bottom left to right: Nestoria Wright and Jessica Raley  
Not pictured: Craig Wahwahsuck, Christopher (Sonny) Fee

## EPA Mission

According to the message from EPA, The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's FY 2018–FY 2022 Strategic Plan, emphasizes the EPA's "Back-to Basics" agenda. The agenda set out in this plan has three over-arching goals\*: (1) Deliver a cleaner, safer, and healthier environment for all Americans and future generations by carrying out the Agency's core mission; (2) Provide certainty to states, localities, tribal nations, and the regulated community in carrying out shared responsibilities and communicating results to all Americans; and (3) Increase certainty, compliance, and effectiveness by applying the rule of law to achieve more efficient and effective agency operations, service delivery, and regulatory relief. The agency's mission of protecting human health and the environment resonates with all Americans; we all can agree that we want our future generations to inherit a cleaner, healthier environment that supports a thriving economy (EPA,2018-2022).

Our nation has made great progress in making rivers and lakes safer for swimming and boating, reducing the smog that clouded city skies, cleaning up lands that were once used as hidden chemical dumps and providing Americans greater access to information on chemical safety. However, we still have important work to do. We must create a sense of shared accountability between states, tribes and the federal government to achieve positive environmental results. Along with faithfully applying the rule of law, improving the processes by which the EPA has operated is crucial in advancing the agency's mission.

Nestoria Wright  
Environmental Director



**AIR**

Over the next five years, the EPA will prioritize key activities to support attainment of the national ambient air quality standards (NAAQS) and implementation of stationary source regulations. We will work with our state and tribal partners to rapidly approve their implementation plans for attaining air quality standards to reduce contaminants that cause or exacerbate health issues.

**WATER**

They will modernize and update aging drinking water, wastewater and storm-water infrastructure which the American public depends on. The agency will continue to leverage the State Revolving Funds (SRFs) and Water Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (WIFIA) to assist states, tribes, municipalities and private entities to finance high-priority infrastructure investments that protect human health and the environment.

**LAND**

The Administration is placing particular

emphasis on the top priority list of Superfund sites and will implement Superfund Task Force recommendations to accelerate the pace of cleanups and promote site reuse, while addressing risks to human health and the environment. The agency will accelerate cleanup by re-prioritizing some resources to focus on remedial actions, construction completions, ready-for-reuse determinations and National Priorities List site deletions.

**CHEMICALS**

They will prioritize the safety of chemicals in the marketplace in the implementation of the new Frank R. Lautenberg Chemical Safety for the 21st Century Act, which modernizes the Toxic Substances and Control Act (TSCA). To achieve this, the EPA will focus on meeting its statutory requirements and mandatory deadlines of TSCA and ensure our reviews are efficient, effective and transparent to stakeholder.

Reference: United States Environmental Protection Agency  
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW Washington, DC 20460  
[www.epa.gov/planandbudget/strategicplan](http://www.epa.gov/planandbudget/strategicplan) EPA-190-R-18-

**128(a) Project Summary**

The Tribal Response Program at the Kickapoo Tribe in Kansas goals and objectives designed to benefit the people of the reservation by creating and maintaining a clean, environmentally responsible atmosphere. The 128 (a) program combines community cleanup and sustainable development that promote the reclamation and protection of our living, working and recreational spaces. The program leverages local, state, tribal and federal partners to promote smart growth, emergency preparedness, recovery planning and Brownfield redevelopment. Additionally, the program ensures chemical safety by mitigating the risks these chemicals pose when entering our products, environment and bodies.

**Emergency Contact Information**

- Tribal Police 785-486-3665
- Fire 911
- Poison Control 800-222-1222
- Health Clinic 785-486-2154
- Hiawatha Hospital 785-742-2131
- Holton Hospital 785-364-2116
- Brown County Sheriff 785-742-7125
- Tribal Office 785-486-2131

**KICKAPOO ENVIRONMENTAL OFFICE**

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Email: [Kickapoo.nestor@gmail.com](mailto:Kickapoo.nestor@gmail.com)

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**Invasive Species**

Our Environmental Specialist, Jessica, is currently working on creating a database of invasive plant species in Kansas. This database will include a list of local invasive plant species, the issues they cause and how to control the plant.

What is an invasive species? An invasive species is a species that is not naturally found in a particular area. Since the species is not native, it does not have any natural predators or competition, which allows rapid growth and spreading. When these plants take over an area they become detrimental to local plants, resulting in a loss of biodiversity and impact human health as well. The unwelcomed organisms can cause an imbalance in the ecosystem that can have a cascading effect on the ecosystem.

The purple loosestrife, for example, is a common invasive plant species in Kansas. Don't let the attractive purple flowers deceive you, these plants overtake habitats, leaving native animals without shelter, food or nests. The



Jessica Raley  
Environmental Specialist



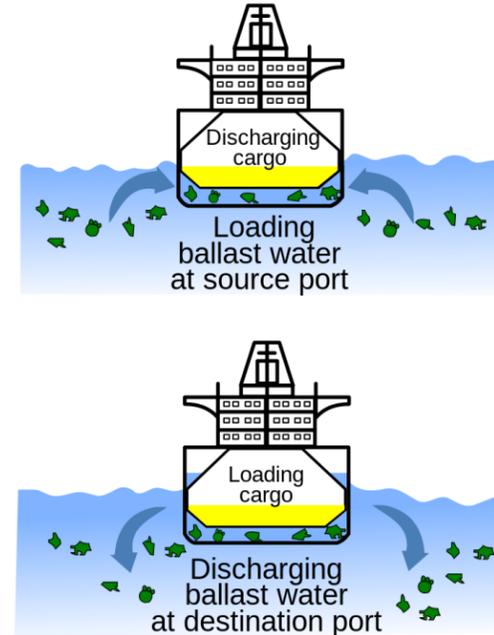
## Sonny Fee

Solid Waste Coordinator



## Illegal Dumping is a Crime

From Kickapoo Tribe Solid Waste, just a reminder that the community cleanup is only during designated times from the EPA office and it is strictly prohibited to dump furniture. The only items that are accepted are metal, tires, and e-waste. No TV's with tubes or computer monitors other than flat screens. The drop off point is in the bins behind the cardboard storage area behind the environmental office. Dumping is prohibited near the Kickapoo Community Building or any other place within the Kickapoo reservation. This is considered illegal dumping and the person dumping can be charged in Kickapoo tribal court #KT 90-14 Code 517.



dense roots of purple loosestrife also change the hydrology of wetlands. Native plants such as cattails and grasses are normally outcompeted by this invasive plant species. Purple loosestrife can be controlled by burning, herbicides, and directly pulling up the plant and root system.

The purple loosestrife made its way from Europe and Asia to North America in the 1800s via cargo ship ballasts. Cargo ships can spread invasive species by filling their ballast with water to balance the boat, which fills their ship with aquatic plants and organisms in the water. When the ship has reached its destination, it discharges, releasing water along with any organisms from the first port.

You can help control the spread of invasive species by cleaning your boat before moving it to a new location, washing hiking and fishing equipment and volunteering to participate in local invasive species removal!

"Protecting the Great Lakes & St. Lawrence Seaway." The Great Lakes Seaway Partnership, 12 June 2018, [greatlakesseaway.org/protecting-the-great-lakes-st-lawrence-seaway-1/](https://greatlakesseaway.org/protecting-the-great-lakes-st-lawrence-seaway-1/).  
 trevoredmonson@gmail.com, Trevor Edmonson. "Purple Loosestrife: The Beauty Is a Beast." *The Daily Journal*, 14 July 2016, [www.daily-journal.com/news/local/purple-loosestrife-the-beauty-is-a-beast/article\\_cd2d832-d4e2-5a5c-9692-6e1639783be4.html](http://www.daily-journal.com/news/local/purple-loosestrife-the-beauty-is-a-beast/article_cd2d832-d4e2-5a5c-9692-6e1639783be4.html).  
 Purple loosestrife (*Lythrum salicaria*). (n.d.). Minnesota Department of Natural Resources. <https://www.dnr.state.mn.us/invasives/aquaticplants/purpleloosestrife/index.html>

## Craig Wahwahsuck

Brownfields/Tribal Response

## Are You Prepared?

Do you have the ability to make it on your own for even a few days in the event of an emergency?

### Basic Home Emergency Kits Include

- Water- 1 gallon per day per person
- Food- 3-day supply of non-perishable food (dried fruit, meat, or canned items)
- Battery or hand powered NOAA Weather Radio
- Flashlights and extra batteries
- First Aid Kit
- N95 masks
- Tools, Wrench and pliers
- Plastic sheeting and duct tape
- Moist towelettes and trash bags (for hygiene and sanitation)
- Infant formula and diapers
- Cell phone and charger
- Medication (a weeks supply)
- Wheelchair batteries



## Chance Bentley

Air Quality Coordinator

## Prescribed Burning and Ambient Air Quality

Prescribed burning is defined as an intentional, managed application of fire to accomplish the objectives of a landowner or land manager. These burnings provide essential benefits to many of the ecosystems present in the midwestern United States and are often crucial for their continued health. These fires, while improving the health of the ecosystems, still emit large quantities of pollutants into the air that are harmful to air quality. Pollutants like excess particulate matter (PM 2.5 and PM 10), mercury, and ammonia are released during burnings and dispersed into the atmosphere. Depending on the atmospheric conditions present, these pollutants can be moved hundreds of miles from the source. In 2017, Kansas ranked 1<sup>st</sup> nationally on the number of acres burned totaling ~2,700,000. These burnings equated to nearly 93,000 tons of PM 2.5 emissions over the period (NEI, 2020) and led to severe reductions in ambient air quality.



AQI Basics | AirNow.gov. <https://www.airnow.gov/aqi/aqi-basics/>  
 Schweizer, D., Preisler, H.K., and Cisneros, R., 2019. Assessing relative differences in smoke exposure from prescribed, managed, and full suppression wildland fire. *Air Quality, Atmosphere & Health*, 12(1), pp.87-95.

The Air Quality Index (AQI) is a measurement of harmful pollutants in the atmosphere. An AQI value of 100 generally corresponds to an ambient air concentration that equals the level of the short-term national ambient air quality standard for the protection of public health. The table below shows how AQI is quantified.

Daily AQI Color	Levels of Concern	Values of Index	Description of Air Quality
Green	Good	0 to 50	Air quality is satisfactory, and air pollution poses little or no risk.
Yellow	Moderate	51 to 100	Air quality is acceptable. However, there may be a risk for some people, particularly those who are unusually sensitive to air pollution.
Orange	Unhealthy for Sensitive Groups	101 to 150	Members of sensitive groups may experience health effects. The general public is less likely to be affected.
Red	Unhealthy	151 to 200	Some members of the general public may experience health effects; members of sensitive groups may experience more severe health effects.
Purple	Very Unhealthy	201 to 300	Health alert: The risk of health effects is increased for everyone.
Maroon	Hazardous	301 and higher	Health warning of emergency conditions: everyone is more likely to be affected.

<https://www.airnow.gov/aqi/aqi-basics/>

Many times throughout the typical burning season, namely March and April, the AQI can exceed the acceptable limits of AQI (<100), leading to an increased risk of health effects (Schweizer et al. 2018). It is essential that you monitor your AQI throughout the year, and especially during the burning season. A good source for AQI information can be found at <https://www.airnow.gov/aqi/aqi-basics/>. Here you can input your zip code, city or state and get real-time updates on AQI

David Hebert, M.S.

Water Quality/NPS Coordinator



## Perennial Crop Solution and Streambank Stabilization

The Clean Water Act Section 319 Department, aka Nonpoint Source Department at the Kickapoo Environmental Office (KEO) is growing *Silphium integrifolium* seedlings in hopes to raise plants big enough to set seed. This perennial crop, *Silphium*, may one day replace corn as a staple oilseed crop but currently, it's still in its infant stages. Many experts point to perennial cropping systems as a solution to replace the use of expensive and environmentally unfriendly chemicals like synthetic fertilizer.

Below is a picture of one of the seedlings at the Community Garden that Dusty Brown and David Hebert are taking care of:



In addition to promoting perennial ag solutions, the 319 department at the KEO also assisted the Kansas Forest Service (KFS) by helping to plant a few hundred cuttings of false indigo bush as well as spreading about 10 pounds of buttonbush, a Kansas native forb, to help stabilize the streambank where 130th street intersects the Delaware river.

Below are the bags of seeds of the button bush we planted along with a picture of what the plant looks like when it flowers:

*"Buttonbush is a great shrub for naturalizing wet areas. The glossy green leaves and fragrant, round flower clusters during mid-summer attract over 24 species of birds and numerous species of butterflies." The Morton Arboretum*

This is part of an ongoing project to stabilize that particular streambank. One of the next steps is to use chainsaws to cut down some of the trees that are hanging over the river-as this prevents them from being blown over or swept away by a flash flood and pulling the valuable root ball with it.



One of the goals of the streambank stabilization project is to reduce the amount of soil that is eroded by the sometimes very fast flowing Delaware river.

Below is a photo of Jarran Tindle and Andy Klein from the KFS surveying their work after just planting a series of cuttings along the streambank. We are hoping that the stream stays calm enough for these cuttings to sprout roots to stabilize the soil on the streambank.

