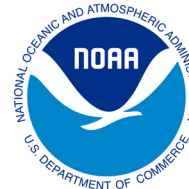


Fiscal Year 2026 Tribal Engagement Accomplishments



Advancing Tribal Drought Resilience Research

Over the past four years, NOAA's National Integrated Drought Information System (NIDIS) awarded more than \$4.5 million for projects to support tribal drought resilience. Most of these funds were awarded via NIDIS's [Coping with Drought research competition](#), funding projects to build effective drought early warning systems and address drought risk on tribal lands.



Amplifying Tribally-Led Research

NIDIS co-created [research profiles](#) with project leads to highlight key accomplishments and project impacts, sharing them with Tribal Nations and partners.

Raising Awareness of Ecological Drought

NIDIS co-hosted the 2024-2026 [National Ecological Drought & Tribal Webinar Series](#) with the [U.S. Geological Survey National Climate Adaptation Science Centers](#) to share actions that build ecosystem resilience and improve drought planning.



Sharing Knowledge Nationally

Two project leads will present their research at national conferences—the National Tribal Infrastructure Coordination Conference and the American Meteorological Society Annual Meeting.

Tailored Information to Support Tribal Drought Early Warning

The U.S. Drought Portal, [Drought.gov](#), is a central hub for drought data that supports the nation in proactively managing drought risk. NIDIS added interactive, customizable maps to the site, which include [tribal boundary overlays](#). This year, NIDIS focused on making Drought.gov easier for tribal audiences to use by gathering feedback through targeted discussions and training sessions. These conversations covered ideal map scales, key

decision-making needs, and essential datasets. Next, the NIDIS drought.gov team will develop planned enhancements and share a beta version with tribal partners for review.

NIDIS is also [funding a project](#) to improve tribal drought monitoring using [Climate Engine](#) tools. This work directly supports the Chickasaw Nation and Choctaw Nation, with completion expected next year.

828 new NIDIS tribal engagement email subscribers

30 Tribal Nations or tribal organizations engaged

882 engaged via the Drought Update and Resources for Pacific Northwest Tribes

RESEARCH INTO ACTION:

Umatilla Drought Dashboard Connects Early Warning with First Foods

This culturally relevant decision-support tool brings together technical data, community observations, and ecological priorities.

When drought develops, its effects go far [beyond a single number](#) on a map. Changes in rain, snowpack, river flows, groundwater, springs, and water supplies affect the plants, fish, wildlife, and people who rely on the land. To show these connected impacts in one clear, practical tool, the [Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation \(CTUIR\)](#) created its [Drought Early Warning System \(DEWS\) Dashboard](#).



Funded through the Fiscal Year 2022 NIDIS Coping with Drought Building Tribal Drought Resilience competition, the project wrapped up earlier this year. The online dashboard helps leaders and community members make decisions and communicate about drought by linking local and regional drought data with CTUIR's First Foods monitoring and real-time experiences on the land and water.

The dashboard helps us see drought not as one isolated measurement, but through the relationships that sustain our community."

– Lyndsi Lewis
Water Resources,
Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation

At left: Wild huckleberries ripening on a branch.
Photo credit: Artur/Wirestock, Adobe Stock.

Expanding Drought Early Warning to Pacific Northwest Tribal Nations

Pacific Northwest Tribal Nations have faced ongoing drought conditions in recent years. NIDIS cultivated a relationship with the Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians (ATNI) to learn how to better support regional drought early warning efforts. Together with state and federal partners, NIDIS and ATNI now share [drought updates](#) and [impact information](#), alongside management and response resources.

Through this long-term partnership, ATNI built a [Dynamic Drought Module](#)—a free, publicly-available web map that combines regional water and climate data. This tool helps tribal users track drought, wildfire risk, extreme heat, and El Niño patterns. NIDIS is helping ATNI connect with tool developers to refine the platform and introduce the module to audiences beyond the Pacific Northwest.

Future Goals

Goals and objectives for the next year include:

Share Knowledge and Information

- Create case studies highlighting successful tribal resilience efforts, including NIDIS Coping with Drought projects.
- Develop a drought community of practice with Tribal Nations in the Missouri River Basin Drought Early Warning System (DEWS).

Customize Drought Early Warning Information

- Update [Drought.gov](#) step-by-step to improve the experience for tribal users, gathering ongoing feedback to refine the website.

Build Regional Resilience

- Bring together Pacific Northwest Tribal Nations and partners to review drought assessments and identify key needs.

NOAA's National Integrated Drought Information System (NIDIS) was authorized by Congress in 2006 (Public Law 109-430) and reauthorized in 2014 and 2019 with an interagency mandate to coordinate and integrate drought research, building upon existing federal, tribal, state, and local partnerships in support of creating a national drought early warning information system. NIDIS is a program within the Climate Program Office, which is part of NOAA's Office of Oceanic and Atmospheric Research. The NIDIS Tribal Drought Engagement Strategy sets key priorities for working alongside Tribal Nations. Since launching the strategy, NIDIS has made significant progress implementing activities that support Tribal Nations preparing for and managing drought. This document highlights NIDIS's accomplishments from the past year.