We, the members of the Tribal Solid Waste Advisory Network, have gathered together to combine our voices in the pursuit of natural resource, cultural, and environmental protection through advocacy of responsible solid waste management for all Native Americans.
TSWAN BACKGROUND

• Organized in 1997 as an ad hoc committee to discuss tribal waste issues.
• Received funding in 1999 to formally organize as a non-profit corporation
• Increased constituency from an initial 5 tribes to 32 in 2010, and includes coalitions in Alaska to include 57 Native Villages
What is an open dump?

EPA defines an open dump as a multi-family site of any size or content.

Many of these sites are where the community disposes of solid waste, but they are unpermitted and uncontrolled for the most part, so are legally defined as open dumps.

Does consider ‘scatter’ or ‘wildcat’ dump sites, but focus has been placed on sites equal to or greater than ½ acre.
Open Dump Inventories on Native Lands

Indian Health Services began a process for quantifying all the open dumps on Native lands in 1998.

Original inventory named approximately 1200 open dumps throughout the United States.

Funding ran out before the report could be completed and this is the number that has been used since 1998 to qualify open dumps for cleanup and remediation.
The Current IHS Inventory

DATA SOURCES
• Dump Inventories by Individual Tribes
• IHS Legacy Data
• Alaska State Landfill and Community Data
• IGAP, Solid and Hazardous Waste Grant Applications
• Brownfield Inventory Data
• Integrated Waste Management Plans by Tribes
• EPA Circuit Rider Site Visits
Results

Identifies over 3400 open dump sites on Native lands.

Over 500 of those are in the Pacific Northwest and Alaska.

Over 70 sites have been classified as “immediate threat” in WA, OR, ID and AK.

95% of those immediate threat sites are in Alaska.

“Immediate Threat”

- IHS formula
  Takes into account hazard factors, proximity factors and size
  Formula:
  \[ \text{Health Threat Score} = (\text{hazard factors}) \times (\text{size}) \times (\text{proximity factors}) \]
- Hazard Factors (points are assigned for the following):
  - Content, Rainfall, Site Drainage, Potential for Flooding, Frequency of Cover, Frequency of Burning, Controlled Access, Public Concern
- Proximity Factors (points are assigned for the following):
  - Vertical Distance to Aquifer, Horizontal Distance to Surface Water, Distance to Homes.
- Size = Site Area
EPA Administrator Lisa P. Jackson
Remarks to NCAI

Referring to a tour of through a tribal area in Arizona:

“We also passed by illegal dump sites, which I know are a persistent challenge in tribal areas across the country. Hazardous waste sites and open dumps expose tribal residents to dangerous toxins and contamination of land and water. That presents a serious health and environmental hazard. But make no mistake, it is also a significant economic obstacle.”
While cleanup of open dumps is an identified national priority for EPA and other federal agencies, available funding needed to adequately clean open dumps and reclaim those sites is severely lacking.

At current funding levels tribes will not see the closure of these hazards even within 7 Generations.
The IHS report will soon be submitted to Congress. The sheer number of open dumps should be a wake up call to even the greenest of elected officials.

Check with your environmental staff to ensure the profile submitted for your tribe is accurate. Were any sites left out? Have new sites appeared in the last year? These numbers are used by the agencies when requesting budgets, so accuracy is vital.
The current Obama administration favors both tribes and the environment, so now is the time to be heard. Congress needs to appropriate more equitable funds to close, clean and remediate the open dumps on tribal lands.
For further discussion and information, please feel free to contact:

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