



MAR 25 2015

Hon. Bob Dixson, Chairman
Greensburg, Kansas

Hon. Ralph Becker
Salt Lake City, Utah

Hon. Salud Carbajal
Santa Barbara, California

Hon. Cindy Circo
Kansas City, Missouri

Hon. Robert Cope
Salmon, Idaho

Hon. Johnny DuPre
Hattiesburg, Mississippi

Hon. Jill Duson
Portland, Maine

Hon. Bill Finch
Bridgeport, Connecticut

Hon. Karen Freeman-Wilson
Gary, Indiana

Dr. Hector Gonzalez
Laredo, Texas

Hon. Manna Jo Greene
Ulster County, New York

Ms. Susan Hann
Palm Bay, Florida

Hon. Tom Hickner
Bay County, Michigan

Hon. Elizabeth Kautz
Burnsville, Minnesota

Hon. Don Larson
Brookings, South Dakota

Hon. Kara Brundin-Miller
Smith River Rancheria, California

Hon. Jeff Morris
Anacortes, Washington

Hon. Marilyn Murrell
Arcadia, Oklahoma

Hon. Ken Miyagishima
Las Cruces, New Mexico

Hon. Adam Ortiz
Edmonston, Maryland

Hon. Carolyn Peterson
Tompkins County, New York

Hon. Dave Richins
Mesa, Arizona

Mr. Kevin Shafer
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Hon. David J. Somers
Snohomish County, Washington

Mr. Jeffrey Tiberi
Helena, Montana

Hon. Lisa A. Wong
Fitchburg, Massachusetts

Frances Eargle, DFO

The Honorable Gina McCarthy
Administrator
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20460

Dear Administrator McCarthy:

As state, local and tribal officials, The LGAC serves in partnership with the EPA to protect our environment, and to meet the many complex environmental and public health challenges. As such, we are writing to support EPA's efforts to build the E-Enterprise for the Environment. The LGAC especially acknowledges the Local Government Portal, which may provide for quick and efficient access to financial, technical, and administrative resources available for environmental compliance. The LGAC commends EPA's efforts to build this website tool, which has the opportunity to enhance federal, state and local government collaboration so that we can ultimately improve the environment for all of our citizens.

Background

Local governments, especially small, rural and disadvantaged communities, have limited financial, administrative and technical assistance available to them to carry our responsibilities for environmental health and safety regulations including drinking and wastewater treatment and solid waste disposal. The Local Government Portal Project envisioned as part of the broader E-Enterprise portal seeks to improve the way local governments are able to access and obtain important federal, state and tribal information on the web. Because many EPA programs that are relevant to local government are delegated to the states, this web-based portal will be customized for local governments to improve access to these EPA programs, thus promoting better environmental compliance.

Findings and Recommendations:

Finding: The LGAC believes that this modernized Local Government Portal has the potential to provide more efficient transactions under environmental programs so that they are modern and efficient.

Recommendations: The LGAC recommends that the EPA target small focus groups to determine the best end-user information needs.

Recommendation: The LGAC recommends that the EPA conduct webinars to train local governments how to access information and how best to use all of the functionality of the Local Government Portal.

Finding: The LGAC believes that developing this Local Government Portal with state government and EPA Regions will provide good input of the needs of state, local and tribal governments.

Recommendation: The LGAC recommends that the EPA seek input from small and rural communities, as well as tribal communities, on their specific information needs.

Finding: Many small and rural communities, including frontier communities, who stand to benefit the most from this Local Government Portal may also have limited access to network options.

Recommendation: The LGAC recommends that the EPA assess how to best provide this information to small and rural communities, especially where access to internet is limited or restricted.

Summary

The LGAC appreciates the work the EPA is doing to improve local government access to information which will enhance our work at the local level to improve environmental management and compliance. The LGAC believes that the E-Enterprise, especially the Local Government Portal, will provide a one-stop place for ready access to resources to assist us in improving the environment for all of our communities. Because the Local Government Portal is still in its development phase, the LGAC would like to continue to weigh in on the program as more information becomes available.

Sincerely,



Mayor Robert Dixon
Chair



Commissioner Robert Cope
Chair, Small Community Advisory
Subcommittee



Susan Hann
Chairwoman, Protecting America's
Waters Workgroup